NEW NARRATIVES

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS

Mary Ann Davis
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The literature which is read by junior high school pupils should be extensive, vivid, humanizing, and uplifting. Adult standards should not ignore the interests and the limitations of youth.—Page 145, Department of Superintendence, *Fifth Yearbook*, "The Junior High School Curriculum."

NEW NARRATIVES

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

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The editor of *New Narratives* wishes to thank all authors, agents, editors and publishers who have given permission to reprint the stories here included.

A LETTER

My Dear Fellow Teachers:

In compiling and editing this book, I have been guided chiefly by the *Fifth Yearbook* of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. So far as possible, the committee urges for the junior high school curriculum reading experiences "centering upon such personal matters as home life, school life, the influence of nature; such units of man's activity as travel, commerce and exploration; such elements of group life as fellowship, loyalty to country, world citizenship" (p. 134).

In accord with the passage quoted, I have selected such stories as "A Student of Languages," happily combining the home and the school, and representing a somewhat higher student life, that the junior pupil may look onward; "The Little New Neighbor," humorously portraying relations of small boys and their elders, and recalling a somewhat earlier life, that the junior pupil may enjoy the superiority he feels to an age recently passed; "The Whoffing Gods," presenting a small orphan of that earlier period, that the pupil knowing vicariously the tragedy of the homeless may be aroused to pity and sympathy. The travel unit and the influence of nature are found in the tragic "Home Is the Sailor," and the comic "Swan Song of Cicero." Such elements of group life as fellowship are obvious in "The Milk Pitcher," wherein the hero's loyalty to his own group is emphasized by repeated instances, and in "Hero" or "The Wuthless Dog," wherein comradeship is dramatized. The influence of nature as represented by the lower animals is also pronounced in these three narratives. Loyalty to community is suggested in "The Sheriff's Educated Son," which

tells succinctly how that son fitted himself to serve, a story every boy will approve for the gun-play courageously performed. Foreign locale, atmosphere, and adventure are happily combined with patriotic feeling in "Pele Versus Uncle Sam." I trust that these illustrations will make clear my reliance upon the guiding principles stated and implied in the "such as" of the *Yearbook,* which further remarks aptly that the junior high school must create a taste for reading and bring home to the pupils the living reality of literature.

Among the plans noticed by the *Yearbook* are: first, theme, for example, stories about dogs, a hint of which I availed myself in selecting two contemporary tales just mentioned; second, "ideals, interpretations of life," a plan I kept in mind throughout, from May Vontver's realistic story of "The Kiskis" to Richmal Crompton's playful fantasy, "On Pixie Hill." Recommended phases of the romantic spirit recalled to me the fourteen-year-old who said, "I do not like stories of adventure; I want to read about love and passion!" If his was the reading ability of the adult, it is to be trusted that his were also the cultivated sensibilities of the educated adult; otherwise the chances are that he preferred the slush applauded in regions below stairs. I have provided "There Are Smiles," which should give food for enjoyment as well as thought to the boy or girl with a turn for sentiment that is clean, wholesome, and swept by a breeze of humor up to the dénouement.

These stories by adults, published for adults, are within the easy grasp of the junior high school student. All are new: they have been published within five or six years, most of them since 1927. Only one, so far as I know, has been reprinted in collections gathered from various authors, and I first reprinted that one in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1928. All, I believe, can have only a salutary effect on the young reader. Not one of them moralizes, for no

artist in fiction permits himself to become a tractarian, but every one of them has said something by implication which will unconsciously guide the student in forming his own character. The protective spirit of Zona Gale's "Bill," the devotion of Albert Payson Terhune's "Hero," and of Lady New Luck's champion, the humorous application of the law, "Mind your own business," in the tale about the Little New Neighbor, and the sheer grit underlying the victory of George Worts's Ruby—these cannot but linger with the young reader long after the stories themselves are forgotten. In short, a residuum remains beneath the facts of every story.

Literature should be organized according to present values in the actual environment of the pupil, says the *Yearbook*. "There should be classification of readings in terms of human attitudes, deeds, problems, and aspirations within the portion of real life as he sees it about him, in which a pupil can participate and by doing so wisely, achieve in himself a fine citizenship and a noble personal worth." On the other hand, are recognized also those phases of escape from life, of imagination, ranging from crude stories of adventure through travel, marvelous inventions, and explorations to delicate fairy stories. With this alternative phase the short story is peculiarly concerned, a phase I forgot at no time but remembered particularly when chuckling over "The Swan Song of Cicero" and "On Pixie Hill."

"The aim of the junior high school is to produce much reading rather than the highest quality of reading carefully analyzed." Taboo, therefore, are philology, history, periods, and types. With all these the present volume has nothing to do.

I have assumed that you concur with the Department of Superintendence in the principles summarized. First, literature exists to give pleasure. If these stories do not, as a

group, please your students, then I deplore my judgment, for that pleasure was my first object. Second, literature should arouse strong, pure emotions. If any other emotion is aroused by these stories, my own interpretation of them is wrong and the authors know not what they do. Third, literature should "lead to knowledge and wisdom, and through such means help to prepare people to lead better, richer, and more useful lives." In so far as one collection of tales for the junior high school may urge to these ends, I believe the collection here offered will prove stimulating.

If, as the advisors declare, the junior high school reading should be extensive and not intensive; if the junior high school postpones the objective of knowing the classics through and through; if the class period is primarily a reading and writing laboratory; if stress should be placed upon individual and collective reading rather than upon class work; then the book should serve the purposes guiding me in its preparation. The questions that follow every story are intended, mainly, to aid the student in recounting the details in the order of their presentation; in the second place, to afford simple tests to those of you who may wish to offer elementary instruction in the straightforward telling of narrative. You will improve upon these suggestions, in connection with the varying abilities of your own groups.

I should be glad to hear from any of you regarding your success in using this collection. Your criticisms I should value, particularly in relation to a new edition or another volume.

Faithfully yours,

Blanche Colton Williams

New York City.

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HOME IS THE SAILOR

BY

BILL ADAMS

Bill Adams

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The author of "Home Is the Sailor" writes from love of the sea and knowledge of ships, for he was a sailor himself until ill health sent him away from the masts and rigging to make gardens and write stories in California. Born at Sevenoaks (which you must pronounce as if it were spelled Snooks), in Kent, England, February 24, 1879, Bertram M. Adams went to school, to Weymouth College, then to sea when he was seventeen. The second night out, his ship was caught in a great storm, lost every sail, and had to put back for repairs. The crew mutinied, saying they would rather go to jail than eat the food and round the Horn on such an unlucky vessel. So they went to jail. Young Adams, who became known as Bill, sailed again with the boat, suffered with the rest in a fortnight of gales, and for 166 days saw no land. "Ice on the rigging," he remembers, ". . . hurricanes. Twenty-one days in a flat calm on the line. Maggots in the hard-tack. Reeking salt pork. Water scarce. But when at last we brought her to port, she shone like a queen. Teakwood and brass work all dazzling with polish and varnish." He made seven similar voyages with that ship. "I am glad that I was not 'raised easy,'" says Bill Adams, "I think a little hardship is the right thing for kids. Discipline, humility, and a right pride."

With his wife and daughter he enjoys his gardens and his home; for his readers he recaptures memories of the sea, which he transforms through a glowing imagination and a sense of reality into tales that please and invigorate.

HOME IS THE SAILOR [1]

I WAS sitting reading in the apprentices' quarters when I first saw him. It was the last night in port; the ship was going to sea in the early morning, and for once I was ready and willing for her to do so. The days of my four-year apprenticeship would soon be over. The three and a half years that lay behind me were none too pleasant to look back upon. She was a hungry ship, and ever since I joined her for my first voyage she had been in the west coast grain trade, making regular passages with general cargo round Cape Horn in June, July, or August, and returning to some European port in the latter part of the Northern winter. I had had my dose of it, and was eagerly looking forward to the end of one more passage, that I might leave her and go up for my second mate's certificate.

I was annoyed to see the youngster come into the half-deck, for I had hoped to have the little room to myself for this last voyage. The apprentice with whom I had hitherto shared it had finished his four years and left her.

The newcomer was slight, rather tall and lanky, with dark eyes and straight black hair. His expression was very open and eager. A boy of about seventeen, he looked soft even for a first voyager. His delicate face was pink and clear, his hands white. He looked shy.

[1] *Blue Book,* February, 1928. Reprinted by permission of the author.

One could easily see that he was a "gentleman's son." The tip of a white handkerchief showed in his breast pocket. He wore a white collar, white shirt, and dark silk tie. And of course he was dressed in the customary spanking rig of an unsophisticated and unsuspecting green sea apprentice—a double-breasted blue serge suit with two rows of big bright brass buttons, an anchor on each of them. A smart new "badge cap" topped him off—a round blue cloth cap with a shiny black leather peak and gold chin-stay, the company's house flag in the loop of the stay. I could have easily guessed what he afterward told me: he supposed this was to be the rig that he would wear at sea.

"Going to sea with her?" I asked.

"Yes, sir," he answered.

"Cut out the 'sir,'" said I, and went back to my reading. I must have looked a bit rough to him, for my old brass buttons were anything but bright, and I'd long ago lost the chin-stay from my battered cap.

A longshore porter arrived with the kid's belongings, and I watched from the corner of my eye as he went to arranging them. When he had made up his bed in the bottom bunk with linen sheets, linen pillow-case, and two or three fancy blankets, he strung up some photographs on the bulkhead above it—father, mother, and a good-looking sister. That done, he looked about the half-deck with evident satisfaction. But when he caught my eye and I asked, "Why don't you hang yourself?" he gazed at me blankly, as though not sure that he had heard aright.

"My name's Chatters," said I. "What's yours?"

'Gillan, sir," he answered. Then, remembering that

I had objected to "sir," he added, "Gillan. I beg your pardon."

I laughed. People on windjammers don't go around begging pardons.

"You'd better roll up those fancy sheets and stick 'em in the bottom of your sea-chest," I said. "You'll find you can sleep without 'em."

He looked very surprised, and glanced at my own bunk with its rough old blankets thrown back, and a wisp of straw protruding from the edge of my ancient "donkey breakfast" mattress.

Preparing to turn in, I took off my worn apprentice uniform and laid it away in my sea-chest, where it would remain until I needed it to go ashore in in Frisco. The morrow would be a long day, and I advised the kid to roll in. The last I saw of him before I fell asleep he was carefully folding his brass-bound suit, and laying it out on the table.

When I awoke the night watchman was lighting our lamp. Day was just beginning to break. It was cold, and I snuggled down for a last few winks. The new chum turned out and peered about the half-deck as though seeking something. He gave me a long look, but supposing me to be asleep said nothing. I guessed what he was after; he was wondering where to wash his face and hands! Sea apprentices wash once a week at sea: on Saturday evening or on Sunday morning; unless it is bad weather, when such washing as they receive is attended to by the sea on the deck. Fresh water isn't plentiful. We take our fresh-water baths in the equatorial rain squalls.

In a moment the kid was dressing himself in his white shirt, collar, and brass-bound suit. When dressed, he made up his bunk, shaking the pillow and straightening the sheets. Then he hurried out to the deck, bright-eyed and plainly much excited.

Some one came bellowing forward. The mate, who had been with her on her last voyage, was a quiet sort of man, the taciturn kind that you find in lots of ships —long ago grown accustomed to taking things as they come. The second mate was new. I had not yet seen him.

I was about to step from the half-deck when I heard a shout.

"Get to blazes out o' the glad rags! D'ye think ye're a blasted ornymint?"

As Gillan hurriedly reëntered the half-deck, half stepping, half falling over the door coaming, the second mate caught sight of me.

"Down to the locker, the two o' ye, an' look alive!" he growled; then went on forward to rouse out the fore-mast hands.

Gillan looked at me, speechless. I said, "We've a little job to do. Better get a move on and change into dungarees."

When you read of the sailing of a ship you read of the folks ashore who wave and cheer, while the sailors wave and cheer back. Flags fly gayly in the off-shore wind. The crew stamps round and round the windlass, singing: *"There's plenty of gold, so I've been told, on the banks of the Sacramento,"* or, *"Waye, aye, you rolling river!"* You never hear tell of the chain locker.

The morning was just opening. Gulls wheeled by.

The river glistened. The tug-boat lay ahead, waiting till our anchor was aweigh.

The hands at the windlass were rousing up a chantey as I lit a lantern and led the new chum, now dressed in dungarees and a work-shirt, below to the 'tween-decks. It was dark down there. The singing of the men on the fo'c's'le head grew faint and far away. I wriggled backwards through the manhole in the forward bulkhead, and he followed me awkwardly.

It was pitch dark in the chain locker; utterly quiet. There was a stale, dank smell of old rust. We were far below the level of the river.

Passing the new chum a chain hook, I bade him grab hold of the incoming cable and help me flake it down as it clanked in. As he set his chain hook in the chain he looked up to the blackness above, and a dollop of mud fell in his face. Muddy water dripped on him. He was much too uncomfortable, much too perplexed, to ask any questions. The iron chain hook was hurting his hands. I guessed that lacing his own shoestrings was about the hardest work that he had hitherto done.

When the cable was all in and I led the way back to the deck it was raining. There was no longer any blue sky to be seen. The tug-boat had dropped us, and we were on the road to 'Frisco. The shore line, already indistinct, was fast fading. The wind was cold. In oilskins and sea boots, the men were hurrying from rope to rope while the second mate bellowed orders. Some were aloft on the yards, loosing sail.

As I hopped into the shrouds to go up and lend a hand on the main, I had a good look at the second mate. He was a big, shock-headed, bulgy-eyed man, and

although without oilskins or sea boots and already wet through was apparently quite unconscious of either cold or wet. Catching sight of the new chum, he shouted to Gillan to jump aloft; but after watching his clumsy efforts to get into the rigging bawled, "Get down! Get down! Ye'll break yer blasted neck!" He pointed Gillan to where the men were hauling down on the topsail chain sheets, and bade him lay back with them.

The rain came down harder, the wind piped up. She began to roll a little. By the time I came down from aloft she was lying over, tossing up a smother at her bow. The new chum was wet through and shivering. His palms were badly blistered. I too was wet through, of course. But I was well used to that.

At close to eight bells, breakfast time, I was working beside the new chum. "Hungry?" I asked. I knew well enough he was hungry. He was almost everything that was miserable—but not quite everything as yet. And she was rolling so now that he couldn't stand without holding on to something.

When he followed me to the half-deck at eight bells I saw that his brass-bound suit had fallen to the deck, and I picked it up and tossed it into his bunk.

"You'll want that when you go ashore in 'Frisco," I told him. He didn't hear me. He had dropped to a seat on his sea-chest.

For breakfast there was of course the usual thing—hardtack and strong bitter coffee. Sorry for the kid, I poured him a pannikin-full.

"Drink hearty," said I, "You've four giddy years of it ahead."

He lifted the pannikin and tried to drink. But he'd

been accustomed to good coffee, with sugar and cream in it. His face turned suddenly green, and he rose and hurried to the deck. When he came back the rain was driving down in sheets. At my advice he managed to change into dry things, and to get into his oilskins and sea boots. His oilskins were good. But some one had sold him a pair of felt-lined sea boots—once wet, never dry—articles of use, perhaps, to steamer men or yachtsmen, who do not often get their sea boots full of water. Too seasick to attempt to eat, he crept into his bunk, his brass-bound suit crumpled beneath him.

In ten minutes or so the second mate appeared and ordered us out. By now the seas were lopping in over her bulwarks and water flowed to and fro with every roll.

"You'll soon get used to it," I told the kid. "The first year's the worst." Tailing on to a rope beside him, I showed him how to use his weight. "It won't be so hard on your hands if you use your weight right. There's a right way and a wrong way of pulling on a rope," I said.

He looked at me gratefully. His body was now protected from the wind by the new oilskins, so that he was hot instead of cold. His pale face was sweaty. But as we gave her more sail she grew wetter and before long he was knocked down and bowled over by a sea, and so was wet through again.

Hour after weary hour went by, every minute one of acute discomfort. The shore was long lost to view. A gray rain-hid sea tossed all about.

The carpenter looked from his shop door and called

to the second mate, "She's getting a good start, Mister."

"Aye," replied the second, knee deep in white water. "Five months o' this an' we'll see 'Frisco."

When we went below for a rest at noon the sea-sickness was scared out of the lad and he was ravenously hungry. There was hardtack and a hunk of fatty pork for dinner. He gulped down his share of the pork, tried to nibble a pantile, and crawled into his bunk. I had to shout and to shake him to awaken him when the turn-to bell struck at one o'clock.

Afternoon passed as the forenoon had passed. I was at the wheel, and saw him from time to time, floundering about the watery decks at the heels of the men, or helplessly clinging to a handrail in the swirl of white water. It was six o'clock before we were below again. Hardtack and skilly for supper. The latter, though supposed to be tea, bore slight resemblance to tea. The new chum drank a pannikin of skilly, ate a couple of pantiles, and once more made for his bunk. The wind howled, the sea roared, but he knew nothing of them.

While the kid slept the second mate came into the half-deck and asked me for a fill of 'baccy. " 'Bout out of your time, ain't you?" he asked me. He had seen that I was no green hand. I saw that for all his noise and bluster he had a kindly eye. There was no bully about him. He was merely a sailing-ship second mate who when there was work to be done liked to have it done and be through with it. When he rose to go he stopped by the new chum's bunk, and fingering a corner of a linen sheet shook his head unbelievingly.

When I roused the kid at eight bells, two hours later, wind and sea were gone down, and the ship was riding easy with a slow gentle roll. The night was very dark and a light steady rain was falling. I took him to the quarter-deck where, by the light of a lantern, the mates were picking the men into two watches. That done and the wheel relieved, the second mate called to Gillan, "Get up to the poop and keep the time!"

Remembering my own first night at sea, I felt sorry for the new chum. Having to watch the clock and strike the bell every half-hour there would be no chance for him to snatch a sleep. Should he happen to snooze, so that the bell was not struck and the man at the wheel not relieved on the tick of ten o'clock, not the second mate only, but the men too would be growling at him.

He struck the bell all right till nine-thirty. It was my wheel at ten, and I went up a minute or two ahead of time, in case he should be asleep. Asleep he was, on his feet, his head tucked down in his breast. Water dripped on him from the spanker, but he was unaware of it. I woke him, and as he went to strike four bells I heard the water squelching in his sea boots. It was very cold.

Until midnight he leaned against the wheel-box behind me and snoozed. Whenever I thought it about time to strike the bell I poked him with the toe of my boot.

At midnight we went below to the half-deck together. Probably no feather-bed had ever seemed so good to him as that narrow little bunk had now become.

When the second mate's watch was roused out again

at four of the morning and he had to go back to the poop to keep the time till beginning of the day's work at five o'clock, he could hardly keep his eyes open. His fingers trembled as he slowly dressed. The linings of his sea boots were sodden. He gasped as he put his bunk-warmed feet down into them.

I didn't see him again till breakfast time. Then, when I entered the half-deck, he was folding his brass-bound suit and laying it away in the bottom of his sea-chest. He didn't ask any questions.

Days and nights passed. Night after night he huddled on the poop, keeping the time. Day by day in his watch on deck he worked at dull jobs: polishing brass-work and binnacles over and over till they shone like mirrors. Hour after hour, kneeling on the hard deck, he chipped rust from bolts and bollards. Always when his time came to go off duty he crawled into his bunk to be dead to the world for the brief three and three-quarters hours of a sailing-ship sailor's watch below. In the dog-watches of an evening, busily preparing for my second mate's examination, I had small time to notice or to talk with him.

Disconsolate and solitary as the new chum was, he began to harden. His blistered hands healed slowly. The skin on his palms and fingers grew tougher. Forced to it by the unceasing invective of the second mate, he learned to walk and to run without holding on, and became accustomed to the clumsy weight of oilskins and sea boots. Lean as he had been when he first came aboard, he was leaner now. The brightness was gone from his eyes, the expectancy passed. Always too tired, too wretched for thought, he was frequently

bowled over and soaked to the bone by boarding seas.

For two weeks we sailed rough waters beneath a cloud-billowed sky. The lad's fancy blankets were salty and damp; his linen sheets had been put away. When occasionally one or other of the mates dropped in to the half-deck of an evening, and, bending over my shoulder, helped me with "day's work" and "longitude by chronometer" problems, neither of them spoke to or noticed Gillan.

By and by the sun came out and the sea shone blue. Wet clothing was hung to dry. Men with worn oilskins begged the mate for a little linseed oil to dress them with. Sea boots were given a dressing of dubbin.

One of the foremast hands who had an old and leaky pair of sea boots saw the new chum's felt-lined boots laid out to dry in the sun and offered a trade.

"I'll give ye a week's whack o' pork for them boots," he said.

Gillan, always hungry, made the trade, and thereafter for a week had a double whack of pork at dinner-time. When the week was gone he was hungrier than ever, and took to hanging around the galley door in the dog-watch, hoping for scraps from the cook. I warned him that he'd find himself in trouble if the skipper saw him sponging on the cook, but my warning was futile. So one evening the skipper saw him eating cabin scraps by the galley door, and from then on he found himself kept at work in the dog-watch every evening for a week. The men snickered at sight of the kid chipping iron rust and polishing brass long after the sun was gone.

"Well, I warned you, didn't I?" I said. He made no reply, but I saw a momentary new expression come to his face. Hot angry sparks awakened in his eyes.

After the dog-watch was his own again he tightened his belt and kept away from the galley. The pinkness was gone from his cheeks. His hands were stained and grimy. Often there was a queer far-away look to him. He spoke only when spoken to. The shyness that had been so noticeable when first I saw him was still there. Looking back, I remember a sort of dignity in that shyness.

I worked with the foremast sailors, all of whom were busied in the rigging, reeving, splicing, and getting everything in trim for the southern latitudes. Ignorant of all sailor work, the new chum was kept at his chipping and polishing, working all alone.

Leaving the trade-winds astern, we ran into blowy latitudes again, and, with no sea boots now, Gillan's feet were always wet. The fellow who had traded for his felt-lined boots had ripped the linings out and went dry shod.

"Where's your sea boots?" the second mate asked him; and, hearing that he had traded them for food, told him that he was a young fool and must take his medicine.

"The skipper's got sea boots in the slop chest. He'll sell you a pair," I told him. Evidently remembering the time when the skipper had seen him accepting scraps from the cook, he reddened and made no answer.

One evening shortly afterward a stiff squall caught her just after nightfall, and all hands were called to

shorten sail in a hurry. Gillan and I climbed to the main royal. No sound reached us but the sound of wind and sea as we swung up the rolling rigging. He had never been aloft, never been off the deck before. The moon beamed on roaring waters.

When I had secured my own side of the sail I went over to help him.

"How d'you like *sailoring?*" I shouted.

His eyes very bright, he glanced at me from amidst folds of white billowing canvas. His cap had blown away and the wind tossed his black hair about his pale forehead. He made no reply, but while I passed the gaskets and lashed down the sail he stood erect on the foot-rope and gazed up to the full round moon above us. His lips were parted. His face delighted and eager, he drank deep of the crisp wind.

When I came down into the topmast rigging he was still standing at the royal mast head, gazing now skyward, now to the glistening crested seas almost two hundred feet below.

The second mate looked up from the topsail yard.

"D'ye think ye're a blasted ornymint?" he bellowed.

His sensitive face white, his eyes gone dull, the new chum came into the half-deck looking as though some one had struck him. The blustering ways of second mates had never troubled me. To me, long ago disillusioned, the sea was merely a means to a living. Nothing more.

"It's no use to carry a grouch," I told him and added, "You can swallow the anchor when she gets in if you want to."

"What's that?" he asked, frowning.

"Skip," said I. "Desert. Run away. Lots of us do."

As I brought out my navigation books I said, "When I came to sea I supposed that all I'd have to do would be to walk up and down in my brass buttons, with a big telescope under my arm."

He made no answer, and I went to my reading and figures.

He had taken off his boots and was chafing his cold feet with equally cold hands.

"See here, kid," I said, "you can't go around the corner without any sea boots."

As though he had not heard me, he remarked, "I thought that too."

"Thought what?" I asked.

"About the brass buttons and the telescope," he answered.

"Lots of us do," I replied, laughing. "I don't know who started the idea."

"*They* thought it too," said he, and nodded to the pictures of his people.

"You'd better go ask the skipper for a pair of sea boots," I said.

"I won't!" he snapped, the angry sparks awakening in his eyes again.

I shrugged my shoulders; I wasn't the little beggar's keeper.

The big winds blew unceasingly. Each day was drearier than the last. The weather was too wild for chipping iron rust or polishing brass-work now. Seas slapped their crests across the bulwarks. Her head sails dripped. Lifelines were stretched from fo'c's'le

to poop, and all hands were set to making robands and chafing mats beneath the cold shelter of the fo'c's'le head. The men talked of stormy latitudes ahead, and spoke of missing ships, and ice on wintry seas.

"Here's him as'll not take no more voyages to sea, I'll bet," said one, turning to the new chum. They snickered at the new chum, while day after day the rain and sleet drove down. . . .

There came a still day when the large slow-floating snowflakes fell, and men with blue noses stamped their feet and beat numb hands upon their oilskins. The second mate bawled:

"Get them brooms along now! Shovel the snow off her!"

The kid's teeth chattered as he flung snow over the bulwarks. No sail flapped. No block creaked. Monotonous mutterings came from the men. Now and again, with a great beating of many-jointed wings, a bird rose from the dark water, flew a little way, and settled with a splash. The second mate, petting the ship's dog in the chartroom doorway, saw Gillan watching the birds. The kid's face was rapt—everything forgotten but the great white birds.

"Get the snow off her!" shouted the second. "D'ye think this is a blasted picnic?"

The sleek dog came from the chartroom and strolled about the poop, indifferent eyes upon the new chum as it passed him.

The skipper came from the cabin, and called to the steward on the quarter-deck, "Fix a good supper for old Ranzo, steward! It's hard weather on a dog."

He noticed the kid, and reëntered the cabin, to be back in a moment with a pair of sea boots.

"Here, you, boy!" he called, and tossing the sea boots to the deck returned below.

Gillan's blue lips were voiceless as he picked up the sea boots. A tantalizing smell of hot food came from the pantry. Whining and wagging its tail, the dog passed down the companion ladder to the saloon where mate and skipper sat down to their suppers.

It was almost dark. Now and again a bird-cry broke the silence.

When we went to the half-deck for our supper of hardtack and skilly there was a sound as of many cattle lowing far away, and coming slowly nearer. We were eating our hardtacks, and sipping the thin hot skilly when the wind caught her.

From that night on there was small time for talk or for books of an evening. There was no roband making by day. In brief lulls of almost ceaseless storm we snatched what sleep we might. Again and again rang the order, *"All hands on deck!"* Again and again at the changing of the watches one or other of the mates called, "Turn in all standing! Keep handy the watch!" Time after time we turned in "all standing"; sleeping in our oilskins and sea boots, lest a sudden call come. After a week of steady gales two of the crew laid up, and, moaning in their bunks, feigned sickness to escape the misery of the deck.

Aloft in furious days and hooting midnights, cold and wet were the unremitting round of all but the two malingerers. Rope-toughened skin on palms split open. Finger-joints cracked, the red flesh showing at the bot-

tom of the cracks. For want of anything better we rubbed pork grease on our "sea cuts." I taught the new chum to tie rope yarns round his wrists and waist and ankles—"soul and body lashings"—to help keep the flooding water out. But still he was always wet. Salt-water boils swelled on his wrists, just where the chafe of the cold stiff oilskin came. "Wait till you get 'em on your knees," said I. For I was limping. Our bedding was wet, our mattresses moldering; the great seas swamped in whenever a door was opened for the fraction of a moment. There were days when we must do without our coffee or our skilly. Days when the sole food available was hardtack.

How Gillan managed to exist during the three full weeks we spent in beating round the corner I don't know. One looked after oneself. Often I caught glimpses of him clinging to the lifelines, waist-deep in white smother. Once I saw one of the crew jerk him from the onrush of a sea just in time to save him from being swept overboard.

The second mate had no time to notice the new chum now. Had he stayed in his bunk, no one would have cared or have missed him. But again and again I found him beside me, aloft on racking topsail yards where none but tried men could be of any use. His lips numb, his face ghostly white, his bruised knuckles raw and red, he did his best at fisting frozen canvas with the rest of us. . . .

When misery was become wellnigh our second nature, there came at last a clear morning with a light wind from the south. She was past the corner! By breakfast-time we had given her full sail, for the first

time in over a month. Countless birds about her, she lifted to the gentle undulations of a southerly swell. The word went round that there would be no work that day.

Some of the men were watching the birds. Some hung wet clothes to dry. I was seated on the hatch, Gillan beside me washing his salt-water boils in a pannikin of fresh water, when the second mate passed by.

I guessed his errand, for on his face was such a contemptuous scowl as he had never worn when savage winds were choking, and wintry waters pounding him. A moment after he had entered the fo'c's'le the two malingerers were hurled from it, and fell sprawling to the deck. They were speedily booted to their feet. His sea-split hands clamped about their necks. Barefooted, bareheaded, dressed in their underclothing only, their eyes bulging, their lips whimpering, they were pushed before him with extended arms and so brought to the cabin door. Presently they returned forward and slunk into the fo'c's'le, their rating reduced from "able-bodied" to "ordinary" seamen, their pay cut down.

The crew were gathered by the fo'c's'le door, jeering the malingerers, when the second mate once more came forward. Stopping in front of Gillan, he looked at the new chum's miserable hands.

"How d'ye like the sea?" he asked. Before the kid could answer the second turned to me.

"The skipper wants ye aft," said he.

My sea cuts and salt-water boils were instantly forgotten, for now I remembered that this was the day on

which my four-year apprenticeship was over. The second mate strolled after me as I made haste toward the cabin door.

I left the cabin gleefully. The mates were talking by the quarter rail, and I told them that the skipper had signed me on as third, and had told me to bring my things aft. Henceforth I was to share the second mate's room, eat at the cabin-table, and draw pay.

My first job as third mate was to order the malingerers from the fo'c's'le, and set them to work upon their hands and knees scouring the decks where constant inflooding water had caused the slippery green sea growths to obtain a hold. Hate me as they might, they dared not grumble. While no one else worked that day, they pushed flat sandstones to and fro, a bucket of water beside each of them to keep the stones wet.

While the second mate and I were seated together on the after hatch, Gillan passed by. I was removing the old apprentice buttons from my shore-going jacket.

"Four giddy years, and you can do the same," I said as the new chum glanced at me.

"I'll bet ye dollars to doughnuts he swallows the anchor," muttered the second mate; the kid, overhearing the words, blushed crimson.

Next day the crew were set to sailor work in the rigging. But the new chum was given a bucket of water and a holystone and put to scouring the deck beside the two malingerers. They knelt in a row together.

Working in contented twos and threes, the sailors talked while they worked. When none of the mates were near, the two malingerers muttered to one an-

other, cursing the mates, and ship, and leering at Gillan.

"You was a blasted fool to go to sea, wasn't you, puppy?" said one.

Gillan pretended not to hear. The fellows swore at him and taunted him, sneering at him because the sandstone pained his split hands. He took no notice of them.

While everyone else's hands healed, the new chum's hands remained sore—chafed by the stone, and continually dipped in salt water. Day by day the malingerers jeered him, calling him foul names, and damning him as one who in days to come would be an officer.

Weeks passed. We picked up a warm southeast trade-wind. All but the three holystoners were busy painting the ship. We were counting the days to 'Frisco.

Evening by evening I worked at my navigation problems, in the room I shared with the second. The new chum dwelt alone in the half-deck, with his salt pork, hardtack, bitter coffee and thin brown skilly. And the pictures of his people hung on the bulkhead.

On a warm Sunday such of the crew as possessed any brought out their shore-going clothes to give them an airing.

Gillan was hanging his brass-bound suit to air as I passed.

"Going to wear 'em when she gets in?" I asked.

He understood my meaning—knew that I was wondering whether he had made up his mind to swallow the anchor. His lips parted, he turned sharply round,

as though about to speak. But he was silent. I saw sparks waken in his dark eyes once more.

As I strolled away to my room the two malingerers came from the fo'c's'le, and, seeing the new chum brushing his brass-bound jacket, nudged one another.

In the second dog-watch that day the second told me to get the kid to the wheel and show him how to steer. I found him in the half-deck, seated at the table, with paper before him and pen in hand. We should be in in a few weeks, and he was writing home—to the people whose pictures smiled on us from the bulkhead. I wondered of what miseries he was telling. The men were singing in the fo'c's'le as he followed me aft. The malingerers walked the fore-deck together. The mates sat talking quietly on the after hatch. The sleek dog dozed near by.

With a soft beam wind just keeping her sails full, she scarcely needed steering, and I left her to him. The rosy sunset shone on his thin white face. The sails glowed above him; the sea glowed below. The second mate called up to me where I sat on the taffrail: "It won't be long now till we take a walk ashore!"

The sun went down. The sea rippled and sang under her counter, beneath her helmsman's feet. The moon rose in the gloomy east. Stars winked, amidst slow-moving little clouds.

His hands on her wheel-spokes, the binnacle light shining on his down-bent face, the new chum seemed almost a spectral boy.

I was standing at the door of the carpenter's shop talking with Chips, when the new chum was relieved and went forward. The moon shone bright on deck-

house and on deck. A murmur of talk and snatches of laughter came from the fo'c's'le.

As Gillan passed me I heard a harsh laugh on the fore-deck. A sneering voice said, "Ye looks as good in 'em as the puppy'll ever look!"

The new chum started, then stopped. For an instant he stood still. As he sprang forward I followed.

Beside the hatch stood one of the malingerers, with Gillan's brass-bound jacket on. Catching sight of Gillan, he threw the jacket off and tossed it to him.

" 'Ere, puppy!" he sneered.

The jacket fell to the deck. It was I who picked it up. As I did so I heard the sharp click of a fist upon bone. The fellow who had been wearing the jacket snapped out a foul oath.

The crew came streaming from the fo'c's'le. Chips hurried from his shop, the cook from his galley. Gillan was on his back on the deck, but for an instant only.

As the new chum staggered backward and went down again, the second mate strode up.

"Back—back, all hands!" he ordered.

A cry of delight came from the crew as the new chum, head down and shoulders hunched, leaped for his antagonist. But as the fellow's fist beat the youngster down for a third time they made as though to close in. Growling, *"Back! Back! Back!"* the second mate flung them away.

The malingerer glanced quickly round the circle of onlookers. His lip was bleeding, and as Gillan rose once more he backed, shifty-eyed, to the bulwarks behind him. The new chum's face was the color of chalk. Sparks blazed in his eyes.

A knife flashed in the moonlight. A yell rose from the men. But the second mate's hand clamped on the malingerer's wrist, and the blade whirled overboard.

"Back! All hands stand back!" ordered the second, and waved the incrowding onlookers away.

Ducking his head and throwing his arms up wildly, the fellow sought ineffectually to guard himself. A hoot of laughter rose. His hands upheld before his frightened face, he leaped away from Gillan, blundered blindly through the cheering crew, and was gone, followed by a bellow of laughter and oaths.

For an instant Gillan stood white and panting, the men about him, the second mate's approving hand upon his shoulder. . . .

The moon went out. A squall piped through the rigging. Dimly seen sails bellied drum-tight, and as the ship reeled down the mate's and skipper's voices rang above the sudden tumult. All hands ran to the gear. While the ship raced toward 'Frisco we lowered and clued up sail, shortening her down in a hurry as squall upon staggering squall burst upon her.

Men who swung upon the foot-ropes gathering in her canvas shouted jocosely to one another, jesting of the fight. Snatches of laughter sounded from the swaying spars.

Cloud fringes parted, and the moon rode out. The sea twinkled and shimmered, high crests snowy, curves molten, hollows cavern-inky.

Jesting as they descended toward the deck, the men in the main topmast rigging cried up to Gillan above them, telling him he'd make a bucko mate some day—

calling him "*sailor*." They told me afterward how his face shone, how his dark eyes danced.

At the moment that the new chum was coming down over the futtock shrouds the second mate looked up, and saw a gasket hanging loose upon the lee main yard.

"One o' you sailors lay out on the main yard an' make that gasket up," he shouted.

A fresh squall smothered the moon. Sea and sky were darkened. Laughter and cheers were mingled with the night's roar.

The second mate's watch went below, the mate's men to coiling up the tangled ropes. As the full force of the wind took her and she lay far over, sprays flying thick and her lee bulwark down in the water, I went to my room.

I had kicked off my boots and was half undressed when a wild cry from the dark deck beside the lee main braces startled me. As man after man took up and repeated that cry I burst through the alleyway door and sprang half naked to the night again. The wind howled. Battering seas smashed on her hidden hatches. Sheets of invisible water flew over ship and crew. Voices were drowned. Ripped from its bolt ropes, a sail whipped into ribbons high above me. Chains clattered on the metal masts. Wind upon wind. Water waist-deep, shoulder-high. Confusion. Skipper, mates and sailors, impotent to save. It was no night to put a boat out!

The squall passed. Cloud fringes parted and the moon broke out. The sea twinkled and shimmered, its high crests snowy, its curves molten, its hollows cavern-inky.

Morning opened clear. Full sail by breakfast time, the ship racing for port.

The mate beckoned me, and together we went to the half-deck to gather the new chum's belongings. His oilskins swung on their hook. Fallen to the deck, his pannikin rolled to and fro. A letter lay upon the little table. From the bulkhead above his fancy blankets his people smiled on us.

We took his oilskins down, and rolled his blankets. We laid his people's pictures where they could not see us, within his sea-chest on his gay brass-buttoned suit. The second mate came in as we were done.

The mate picked up the unsealed letter. The same thought was in the mind of each of us: The tale of all his misery would be there; hunger and cold, and three hard heedless men. Either one of us, all of us, might have made the misery less!

The second mate and I looked at the mate; he gazed back at us.

"*You,*" he muttered, and thrust the letter toward me.

I read, aloud at first—then scarce whispering: . . . "They say the first year is the hardest. *It is not hard.* . . . I'll soon be home."

QUESTIONS

Why is the "I" narrator a good one for telling this story?

How does Gillan show by appearance and act that he is embarking on his first sea voyage? How does the author use contrast to enforce picture and behavior?

Recount the events that precede Gillan's laying away the brass-bound suit.

Mention details showing that "the kid" was made of good stuff.

Recount the episode that roused his anger.

Describe the system of bells at sea. (See any good unabridged dictionary.) What is the dog-watch?

Are you ever in doubt that "the kid" will "swallow the anchor"?

What is the flash that finally lights up his character?

Find the meanings of the following words: *coaming, dungarees, chantey, pantile, skilly, spanker, binnacles, bollards, dubbin, gaskets, robands, hard-tack, holystone, futtock shrouds.*

Write a story of adventure in which you have had part, trying to make it real for your readers, who are your teacher and classmates. If you prefer, write a story of adventure in which you would like to have part.

STORIES ABOUT THE SEA AND SHIPS

Bill Adams, "Jukes" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1927, Doubleday).

Donn Byrne, "Underseaboat, F—33" (*War Stories,* Holmes and Starbuck; T. Y. Crowell Co.).

Lincoln Colcord, "An Instrument of the Gods" (Title story, Macmillan Co.).

James B. Connolly, "The Sail-Carriers" (*The Deep Sea's Toll*); "The Blasphemers" (*The Crested Seas*); "The Venture of the 'Flying Hind'" and "The Cruise of the 'Bounding Boy'" (*Open Water*); "The Seizure of the 'Aurora Borealis'" (*Wide Courses*); "The Last Passenger" (*Sonnie-Boy's People*); "The Trawler" (published separately, and in *Head Winds*); "Aboard the Horse-Boat" (*Hiker-Joy*); "What Price for Fish?" "Not Down in the Log," "Beejum's Progress" (*Tide Rips*). (All published by Chas. Scribner's Sons.)

Joseph Conrad, *Typhoon;* "The Brute" (*A Set of Six*); "The Secret Sharer" (*'Twixt Land and Sea*); *The Nigger of the Narcissus; Chance.* (Conrad's works are published by Doubleday, Doran.)

Stephen Crane, "The Open Boat" (*Scribner's Magazine,* June, 1897. Reprinted in *A Book of Modern Short Stories,* Brewster, Macmillan Co.).

Marjory Stoneman Douglas, "He Man" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1927); "The Peculiar Treasure of Kings" (same series, 1928, Doubleday).

Ralph deS. Horn, "The Jinx of the 'Shandon Belle'" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1922, Doubleday).

Rudyard Kipling, "An Unqualified Pilot," "The Burning of the 'Sarah Sands'" (*Land and Sea Tales,* Doubleday).

John Masefield, *The Dauber* (verse), (Macmillan Co.).

Edgar Allan Poe, "Manuscript Found in a Bottle" (reprinted many times; for example, in *Tales of Edgar Allan Poe,* edited by Blanche Colton Williams, Macmillan Co.).

Morgan Robertson, "The Wreck of the Titan" (Title story, McClure-Metropolitan).

John Russell, "The Slaver" (*In Dark Places,* Alfred A. Knopf).

Wilbur Daniel Steele, "A Life" (*Pictorial Review,* August, 1921); "La Guiablesse" (*Harper's Magazine,* September, 1919).

Albert R. Wetjen, "Command" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1926, Doubleday).

THE MILK PITCHER

BY

HOWARD BRUBAKER

Howard Brubaker

Born in Warsaw, Indiana, June 26, 1882, Howard Brubaker took his A.B. degree from the State University at Bloomington, in 1902, and shortly afterward went to New York. From connection with a settlement house, he progressed to a position with the Bureau of Municipal Research, to an editorial post on *Success,* and later to one on *Collier's.* Since 1923 he has been Secretary of the Writer's Publishing Company. He is also managing a department in *The New Yorker.* The first stories to bring him recognition were concerned with the doings of Randolph Dukes; these were later collected under the title *Ranny.* He writes best of youngsters, but humorously and entertainingly of older people, as well.

THE MILK PITCHER [1]

THE Fullers named their son "Philip" after his maternal grandfather. That was an error in judgment because the time came when the name Phil Fuller aroused chuckles and snickers among the pleasure-loving faces of the countryside. At the age of one Phil had practically settled upon red as the best color for hair. Some time in his third year the truth was established that he was left-handed. When given something he did not want he threw it away with violence.

This act seemed to set up pleasurable emotions in his young soul. His simple face widened into a grin and before long he was heaving things around for the sheer love of heaving.

At four Phil sprouted a genuine freckle on his nose, the forerunner of a bumper crop, and even his prejudiced mother had to admit that his ears were large for their age.

The youth spent his fourth summer in the society of a Jersey calf named Lily, who was tethered in the orchard. Phil had nothing to do except to throw green apples at a tree with his left hand, and Lily's time was also her own. The child learned not to wince when she licked his pink nose with her rough tongue, and the calf put up with some pretty rowdy conduct too. Both infants cried when separated for the night. The tender

[1] *The Country Gentleman,* June, 1929. Reprinted by permission of the author.

attachment between Phil and Lil was the subject of neighborhood gossip as far away as the Doug Morton place at the bend of Squaw Creek.

When Phil was six he threw a carriage bolt from the wagon shed into the water trough, and he laughed so boisterously over this feat that Mr. Harrington heard the noise while passing in a light spring wagon.

Phil had a misguided sense of humor. It seemed to him that throwing things was the world's funniest joke. As he picked up a stone and let it fly the freckles on his face arranged themselves into a pleasure pattern, his features widened and he grinned expansively, showing vacant spots where he was changing teeth.

By this time his love for the cow stable had become a grand passion. Horses, dogs, cats and pigs meant rather less in his young life than they do to most farm boys, but cows meant more. Phil attended all the milkings with his father, dealt out bran and threw down hay. He wandered in and out among bovine legs without fear; hoofs, horns and teeth had no terrors for him. He was soon old enough to drive the cattle to pasture and bring them back.

At the age of eight he was probably the ablest redheaded cowboy and left-handed stone-thrower in Clinton Township. At this date in history he had drunk enough milk to float a battleship and thrown enough stones, sticks, bones, horseshoes, apples, corncobs and baseballs to sink one. He was now the owner in fee simple of Lily's knock-kneed daughter, Dolly. This white-faced blond flapper followed Phil around with adoration and bleated at the barnyard gate until her playmate came home from school.

That fount of knowledge was Clinton Township, District No. 5, known locally as Tamarack School. There he absorbed a reasonable quantity of booklore and learned to pitch a straight ball with speed and control. He is still remembered in educational circles as the southpaw who hurled the Tamarackers to glorious victory over the Squaw Creek outfit, while unveiling the broadest grin ever seen on the lot and issuing many unnecessary noises. Although he had a lot of influence over a baseball, he could not make his face behave.

Baseball was the great joy of Phil's school years. Every spring when the frost came out of the ground his flaming head sprang up on the soggy field like a tulip. He had never learned to bat well, but he was a thrower of great ability and a laugher and yeller of great audibility. In school when asked to give the boundaries of Baluchistan he could scarcely make the teacher hear, but on the diamond his disorderly conduct was noted and deplored as far away as Grandma Longenecker's cottage.

The game uncorked his inhibitions and released his ego. His habitual shyness vanished and gave place to vociferous glee. He did frolicsome things with his feet, his arms went round like a windmill wheel, sometimes he burst into what he wrongly believed to be song. Miss Willikans, the teacher, testified that Phil had easily the worst singing voice that had attended District Number 5 in her time—which would be nineteen years if she lived through this term, as seemed highly unlikely.

Inevitably there came an afternoon in late May when Phil's career as a Tamaracker had run its course. He twisted a button almost off his new coat, whispered

a graduating piece about Daniel Webster, took his books and his well-worn right-hand glove and went back to the cows.

At five o'clock the following morning the fourteen-year-old Phil became the vice president and general manager of the dairy department of the Fuller farm. His father was overworked, help was scarce and expensive and the graduate of Tamarack was judged strong enough to handle the job. He milked all the cows that summer, cleaned the stalls, helped to get in the hay and fill the silo. He ran the separator, he churned, he carried skim milk to the pigs. The end of the summer found him a stocky lad of rather less than normal height but with a rank growth of feet, arms and ears. He had the complexion of a boiled beet and hair exactly the shade of a two-cent stamp. His hands were large and fully equipped with freckles, calluses, bumps, cracks, warts, knuckles and rough, red wrists.

Phil could lift with one hand Dolly's new calf, Molly, he could throw a ten-pound sledge-hammer over the hay barn, he could sing like a creaky pump, and he shattered all known speed records from the stable to the dining room. He was an able performer with the table fork as well as with the pitchfork.

In September he took all these assets and liabilities and his first long pants and went to Branford to live with Aunt Mary and Uncle Phineas and attend high school. As he was winding up his affairs preparatory to this great adventure, it was clear that he had something on his mind. It came out one night at supper in the hiatus between the fifth and sixth ears of Golden Bantam.

"It's too bad they don't keep a cow," he said, apropos of nothing.

"Oh, sakes alive, child!" mother exclaimed in surprise. "They wouldn't want to be bothered with a cow."

Phil's ears went red. He polished off his corncob and returned to the attack. "They wouldn't need to be bothered much. They have no horse any more and there's room in the barn. I could feed her and milk her and everything. I bet Aunt Mary would be glad to have lots of nice milk and cream. We could tie her behind the buggy and take her in with us."

"Tie who—Aunt Mary?" asked father with ill-timed facetiousness.

"Dolly," said Phil.

A dozen objections were raised and disposed of. Aunt Mary and Uncle Phineas were consulted by telephone and after the first shock they agreed to the outrageous plan. And thus it came about that Phil Fuller was the first case in recorded history of a boy who went to Branford High School accompanied by a private and personal cow.

During those first months of strangeness and homesickness, Dolly was his comfort and his joy, his link with the familiar. He brushed and polished that blond cow until her upholstery was threadbare, pampered her with choice viands and clean bedding, scrubbed and whitewashed the interior of the old barn, put in window sashes to give Dolly more sunlight and a better view. Often when the day was fair he led her around the block to take the air and see a little city life.

At six o'clock of a dark, bitter morning the neighbors could hear distressing noises issuing from Phineas Rucker's lantern-lit barn and they knew from sad experiences of the past that another day was about to dawn and the red-headed Fuller boy was singing to his heart's true love.

Dolly was now in the full flush of her splendid young cowhood and home was never like this. Phil plied her with experimental mixtures—beet pulp, ground oats, cottonseed meal—and carefully noted the results. The contented cow responded gratefully to this treatment. Before long she exceeded the needs of the Rucker family and Phil was doing a pleasant little milk business with the neighbors. His immaculate barn, his new white overalls, his vocal excesses and his free street parades all helped trade. The milk inspector passed Dolly with high honors, and doctors recommended her for ailing babies. Presently she was one of Branford's leading citizens, a self-supporting twenty-quart cow commanding a premium of three cents over the market price. Phil had discovered his life work.

His second great discovery did not come until spring. On a blustery March day he was out on the diamond behind the high school building warming up his left wing and chuckling over his favorite joke when Mr. Huckley, chemistry teacher and baseball coach, came along.

"Southpaw, eh!" he demanded. "Let's see what you've got, Fuller."

Phil gave a brief exhibition of his wares with Dinky Doolittle holding the catcher's glove.

"Plenty of steam and good control," the teacher said,

"and your footwork is terrible. Now show us your curve."

"I haven't got any," Phil answered. "Nobody ever showed me how to pitch a curve."

"Somebody will now," Mr. Huckley said. "Whether you can do it or not is another question."

That was the beginning of a beautiful friendship and a new era in the life of Philip Fuller.

Mr. Huckley had pitched on the team of Athens University, of which he was a graduate. He liked Phil, admired his able hands, his abnormally developed forearms, his keen joy in the game. The coach saw great possibilities in this piece of raw material and he spent a patient hour teaching Phil some of the rudiments of curve pitching and in time they achieved a perceptible out curve. At the height of his exultation, the boy pulled out a nickel-plated watch and said:

"I ask you to excuse me now. It's time to milk my cow."

After a week of such instruction, Mr. Huckley handed down this decision: "You have the makings of a good pitcher, Phil, if you're willing to learn. You have a couple of fine qualities and not over twenty-five or thirty serious faults."

Phil's ears flushed with pleasure and embarrassment.

"Well, maybe I can get shut of some of them—I mean those—faults. I've got four years to do it in."

"Right-o. You have good control of your fast one, you have a nice little out, and you have the worst style of wind-up these eyes have ever seen."

Four years of study, dairying and baseball, with summers of hard work on the farm made Phil a dif-

ferent boy—different and yet curiously the same. His shoulders were broader, his arms stronger, but he did not add many inches to his stature. He knew more mathematics, science and history, but Latin was still Greek to him. Although he took on some of the manners and customs of his town contemporaries, he still had the gait of one walking over a plowed field. In time he learned to talk with girls without being distressed, but as a social light he was a flickering flame in a smoky chimney. He was a conspicuous success on the barn floor but a brilliant failure on the dance floor. His voice changed, but not for the better. His matin song to Dolly now sounded like a bullfrog with a bad attack of static. He wrote a creditable little rural farce for the senior dramatic class and further distinguished himself as the worst actor on the American stage.

Though much ridiculed, he was universally liked and genuinely respected. On the ball field he was a source of low comedy to friend and foe because of the eccentric behavior of his face and feet, but in his succeeding seasons on the mound he pitched the Branford High School out of the cellar position into respectable company, into select society and finally, in his senior year, into the state championship of the small-town division.

At the joyfest in the assembly hall in celebration of this final triumph, Phil was forced to make a speech. He fixed his eyes upon his third vest button and informed it in confidence that it was Mr. Huckley who had made him what he was today—which wasn't so very much.

When his turn came, the chemist and coach arose and

told the world a great secret about this Phil Fuller who had now pitched his last game for dear old B. H. S. Phil, he said, owed his success as a pitcher to his having been brought up in a cow barn. Constant milking had developed his forearm muscles to surprising strength, and the knots and knobs on his good left hand had enabled him to get a spin on the ball that produced his deadliest curves.

"I therefore propose," he said, "that Phil's girl friend, Dolly, be elected an honorary member of the team."

This motion was seconded with a will and carried with a whoop, and Dolly became, as far as anyone could learn, the only cow that ever belonged to a ball club.

"Phil has told you," Mr. Huckley went on, "that he got some help from my coaching. If so, he has chosen a rotten way to pay his debt. Instead of going to a high-class and fancy culture factory like Athens, he has decided to enter Sparta Agricultural College. Athens and Sparta are deadly enemies in athletics and some day Phil may use what I have taught him against my own alma mater. There is no use trying to keep Phil from running after the cows; but this is a sad blow to me. I didn't raise my boy to be a Spartan."

It was the county agricultural agent who had first put Sparta into Phil's head. The boy had naturally assumed that his education would cease with high school, but this Mr. Runkleman came into Dolly's palatial quarters one day and spoke an eloquent piece in favor of his own Sparta.

"A boy who intends to be an expert dairy farmer," he said in part, "ought to learn all there is on the sub-

ject. You have a natural gift for taking care of cows, but what you don't know about scientific dairying would fill a ten-foot shelf."

"That's so," Phil answered, "but I haven't got much money."

"You don't need much money. Lots of the boys are working their way through. I'll guarantee that you get a job in the college dairy barn. The work will pay your board, teach you the practical side and you'll meet the nicest cows in the world."

This was a weighty inducement and one crisp day in late September found Phil knocking at the door of the higher education. He was a youth of five feet five with fiery hair and complexion, with ears that stuck out like red semaphores; a homely, awkward, likable boy, full of hope, inexperience, diffidence and whole raw milk. His only regret was that he could not take Dolly with him to college.

Because of Mr. Runkleman's hearty recommendation, he got his job in the dairy barn and he took a room in a house near by. His days sped by in a new kind of eternal triangle—boarding-house, dairy and classroom—and he was happy in all three places.

Every morning at the ghastly hour of four he trudged through windy blackness to the big concrete barn. Now followed several hours of milking, feeding, currying and stable cleaning in company with half a dozen other cow students, then home to breakfast and to class. In the late afternoon there was a repetition of these chores, followed by dinner, some study and an early bed. Such was the wild college life of this flaming youth.

Football, the great autumn obsession, meant little to him. Basketball was more fun, but a habitual early riser makes a poor customer of night life. In fact, Phil made up his mind that, for the first year, he would waste no time on athletics.

Sibyl Barnett Samboy, the wife of Kenneth Samboy, director of Sparta athletics, said after Phil had been introduced to her at the freshman reception: "That's the first time I ever shook hands with a Stillson wrench."

Although he honestly intended to keep out of baseball, the first warm afternoon in March brought on an attack of the old spring fever. There was no harm, he thought, in getting out a ball and glove and tossing a few to "Spider" Coppery behind the barn while waiting for milking time. Before long it was a regular practice among the "cowboys" to beguile their idle moments with playing catch and knocking up flies and presently there was talk of forming a team to play a game with the students of the horticultural department, otherwise the "greenhouse gang."

An insulting challenge was given and taken and the game took place on a pleasant Saturday.

This contest was held upon the old ball grounds. The new stadium was built upon a better site and the former athletic grounds with their little grandstand were given over to the general use of the students. Samboy was a firm believer in athletics for everybody. He loved to stir up little wars between classes, dormitories, fraternities and departments. Often these little home-brew contests developed and uncovered talent for the college teams.

Along about the fifth inning of this ragged ball game an uninvited guest appeared among the handful of spectators in the grandstand. Phil was on the mound at the time.

So Mr. Samboy's eyes were gladdened by the sight of a stocky, freckled, red-headed southpaw who burned them over with power, who laughed from head to foot and uttered unfortunate noises.

Samboy talked with him after the game, poked his nose into his past and urged him to try for the college team.

Phil protested that he was too busy with his classes and his cows. It was a long argument, but Samboy won.

"Report to Donnigan on Monday," said the director, "and tell him I suggested that he look you over. Every coach has a free hand with his own team, you know, but if he turns you down let me know and I'll give you a tryout on the freshman team. I'll speak to Professor Wetherby, if you like, and ask him to let you shift hours at the dairy while you're trying your luck on the diamond."

"You don't suppose"—Phil was visibly embarrassed —"there wouldn't be any danger of me losing that job—or anything? I wouldn't do that for all the baseball there is."

"Not a chance, Fuller. We don't give fellows positions here because they are good athletes, but we don't fire 'em either."

H. B. Donnigan—"Hardboiled Donnigan"—had learned his trade under the great Tim Crowley, of the Eagles. Donnigan's big-league days were over and he

was making a living coaching college teams. He used the Crowley method and the Crowley philosophy. All ball players were worms and should be treated as such.

He had spent his boyhood among the tin cans and bottles of a vacant lot in New York's gas-house district and he never really believed that ball players could be grown in the country.

One trouble with his policy was that it did not work at all. It was rumored that when his contract expired at the end of the season Samboy would let him go. A sense of his failure did not improve the coach's technic —or his temper. It was to this man-eating tiger that Samboy had cheerfully thrown the red-headed rookie from the cow barn.

"And now who let you in?" was Hardboiled Donnigan's address of welcome.

"Mr. Samboy said would you please look me over."

The phrase was perhaps an unfortunate one. The coach did exactly that.

"All right. Tell him I've done it, and if you're Lillian Gish I'm Queen Marie."

"I'm a pitcher—southpaw." Phil's hard-earned grammar fled in this crisis. "I done good in high school."

"Oh, all right, stick around," said the testy coach. "When I get time, I'll see if you've got anything."

He seemed to forget all about Phil—who had not the slightest objection. The boy had a bad case of stage fright, partly from Donnigan's ill-nature, but more from the immensity of the empty stadium. He had almost made up his mind to sneak back to his

beloved cows when he realized that he was being addressed.

"Hey, you—carrots—come out to the box and pitch to the batters." Donnigan took his place behind the plate. "Murder this guy," he muttered to Risler, a senior and the captain of the team.

Risler murdered, instead, the bright April sunshine in three brutal blows. The old miracle had happened again. The moment Phil took hold of the ball and faced the batter he forgot his fears, he remembered only that throwing a baseball was the greatest fun in the world.

"Hey, wipe that grin off your map," yelled the coach. "What do you think this is, a comic opery?"

Phil controlled his features with an effort while two more batters showed their futility. Donnigan handed his catcher's glove to "Swede" Olson.

"Gimme that stick," he growled. "You birds belong in a home for the blind!"

There were two serious mistakes that Phil could make in this crisis and he made them both without delay. He struck out Hardboiled Donnigan and he laughed. Of course he knew better than to ridicule the coach, but there was something irresistible about the way Donnigan lunged for that last slow floater.

"All right, now you've done your stuff, get out!" yelled the offended professional. "And stay out. I can't monkey with a guy who won't take his work serious. Laugh that off."

A few snickers were thrown after the defeated candidate, but the players knew that Donnigan had committed a manager's unpardonable sin of turning down a

promising recruit on a personal grudge—and he knew that they knew.

As for Phil, he left the stadium with genuine relief. The more he saw of Donnigan, the better he liked cows. He had kept his promise to Samboy; now he would just sink out of sight and stick to business.

In reply to an inquiry, Samboy got a letter from Mr. Huckley stating that, in the opinion of an old Athens pitcher, Phil Fuller was the best that Branford High School had ever produced. The director showed this tribute to Donnigan.

"Oh, that's the sorrel top. He hasn't got anything but a giggle."

"Are you sure, Hank? We could use a good southpaw."

"I know, but he ain't the answer. This Athens bird is trying to frame us."

"I'll wish him on the freshmen then."

"Sure—give the kid a chanst, Ken," said Donnigan with affected good will. "He might show something if he ever gets over the idea it's all a big wheeze."

Phil was heartily welcomed into the freshman squad. In the presence of Samboy he performed ably in a practice game. His fast ball, well-controlled curve and change of pace made the inexperienced batters helpless and his strange conduct landed him in the public eye with a bang.

The college comic paper, The Cutup, had a fine time over Phil. It discovered that the eccentric lefthander was a cow-barner and it almost died of laughter at this joke.

"Phil Fuller, the Milk Pitcher," was the title of the

piece. He was one of the wide-open faces from the wide-open spaces, the wit said, and sure winner of the standing broad grin. Also he proved the truth of the old saying, "Little pitchers have big ears."

But the result of the publicity was that the crowd at the freshman-sophomore game was the largest of the season. Among those present were old President Whitman, Professor Wetherby and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Samboy.

The assembled underclassmen laughed until they ached at the grinning, gesticulating, noisy southpaw with the red-thatched roof. They greeted his queer, awkward windup with a yell invented by the sophomore cheer leader, a long, rhythmic "So—o—o, boss." But when he had won the game handily for the freshmen, the jeers turned to cheers.

Sibyl Samboy looked at her husband.

"And why," she asked, "is this infant phenomenon not on the varsity?"

"Hank can't see him somehow, and if I butt in it upsets my whole system of government. Personally I'd pitch him in a game or two to season him and then try him on Athens. But it isn't worth a rumpus, Sib. After all, Fuller will be with us a long time yet and Donnigan won't."

"Poor old Hank! I wonder what he's got against the boy."

"It's incompatibility of temperament, I guess. Hank thinks baseball is cosmic and Phil thinks its comic."

"And you," said Sibyl, "think you're a wisecracker on The Cutup."

In the next issue of that little weekly there was a

marked difference in tone. The frosh cowboy, it said, was showing ability as well as risibility. It was time Donnigan tried him out on the team.

There was something inevitable about the Phil Fuller movement. Donnigan did not want him on the team, Samboy was committed to keep his hands off, and Phil himself had no craving to appear in that big stadium. But the team was limping through a disastrous season and there were signs of disaffection among the players. The crowds dwindled, finances were suffering, and the all-important Athens game, the schedule's climax, was approaching like the day of doom.

Donnigan resisted as long as he could, but, schooled as he was in the professional game, he recognized one power greater than players, managers or owners—the customer. And when white-haired Doctor Whitman called him into the president's office and intimated ever so gently that it might be just as well to give the public what it wanted, he gave in.

He did not surrender, but he retreated inch by inch. He gave Phil a uniform and let him practice with the team and learn the signals, then put him in at the end of a game that was already hopelessly lost. On the eve of the Athens contest he announced that he would pitch Hagenlaucher with Graybar and Fuller in reserve.

Any contest with the traditional foe always brought out the largest crowd of the season, but this year there was a novelty in the situation. The freshmen were out in full force prepared to make an organized nuisance of themselves on behalf of their favorite character. When he appeared on the field for practice they gave him a tremendous ovation.

Just before the game started, Phil realized that somebody was calling to him from the edge of the stand. To his great delight, this proved to be Mr. Huckley, who had traveled all the way from Branford to see the game.

"Phil," he said, "if you get a chance today, I want you to do your darnedest."

"I'd kinda hate to play against Athens after all you did for me."

"I know. That's why I spoke. Forget all that, Phil. If they put you in, pitch as you did last year against Milltown, Three Falls, Oderno and Jefferson. Good luck!"

"Thank you, Mr. Huckley. I'll meet you right here after it's over. I've got something to tell you."

As he took his seat on the bench his smile faded and he lapsed into gloom. "He's scared stiff," thought Donnigan. "I won't dare to stick him in if Haggy blows."

But Hagenlaucher was not blowing up; he was pitching his best game of the season. The Athens moundsman was doing well, too, and there was promise of a tight pitchers' battle. But in time the game grew looser, the pitchers faltered, Haggy was getting wabbly.

The score stood 6 to 5 in favor of the visitors in the fifth when the umpire made the momentous announcement "Greenwich batting for Hagenlaucher." At the same moment Graybar and Fuller left for the bullpen to warm up. The next inning would see a new face in the box.

Whose face? That was what all Sparta wanted to know; that was what Samboy wanted to know as he stepped out of the stand and walked up to Donnigan.

"Graybar," said the coach. "Fuller is scared to death. I guess he's got a yellow streak."

Samboy hesitated. The teams were changing sides now and the embattled freshmen were booming in unison, like a base drum: "Phil! Phil! Phil!"

"All right, you're the doctor, Hank. But I'll go and talk to the boy."

The new pitcher did his best, but he was a broken reed. A base on balls, a single and a hit batter filled the bags, with nobody out and the air was full of disaster. Captain Risler stepped to the box as if to steady the wabbly pitcher; Swede Olson, the catcher, joined this conference, which was further enriched by the presence of the lanky first baseman, Keeler.

Now Graybar handed the ball to Risler, who made a sign toward the bench. There was an instant of suspense, and then out of the dugout appeared the gaudy head of Phil Fuller.

An avalanche of sound slid down upon the field. From the freshman bloc came the long, rhythmic yell, "So—o—o, boss." In the general confusion, Hard-boiled Donnigan was scarcely seen emerging from the dugout. He seemed to shrink before the wave of noise, then he disappeared through an opening out of the field, and out of the athletics department of Sparta.

Scarcely anyone in the audience knew that Donnigan had not ordered the change of pitchers, nor had Samboy. It was Risler, backed by Olson, Keeler and the whole team. It was mutiny, it was rebellion.

But this was not the familiar Phil Fuller who had laughed and danced his way into the hearts of the fans. This was a serious Phil, a gloomy Phil. Life was now

real, life was earnest. He took his long queer windup and he threw the ball high, far too high. Olson made a jump for the ball, missed it and landed in a heap. Before he could recover the ball two runs had come over and Athens rocked with laughter.

But so, to the amazement of the universe, did Phil Fuller. It suddenly seemed to the misguided youth that it was the funniest thing in the world that he should have thrown away the ball and let in two runs. The infield laughed in imitation. Philip was himself again.

Now the tension under which the team had been working suddenly relaxed as if a tight band had snapped and brought relief. The nervous, eager, do-or-die spirit suddenly disappeared, leaving the natural instinct of youth to have a good time. With the utmost ease the pitcher and the infield disposed of the next three batters and in their half of the inning they began their climb toward victory.

It was a strange, exciting, hilarious game. Phil had never played in such fast company before or faced such a murderous array of bats. He was in hot water half a dozen times, but he never lost the healing gift of laughter.

And the team played as if baseball came under the head of pleasure.

Samboy said to Risler, who sat beside him on the bench in the eighth:

"Whether we win or lose, this is the answer. We're going to build a new idea and a new style of play around that southpaw. You watch our smoke for the next three years, Rissy."

"Just my luck, Ken. In about fifteen minutes I'm through with college baseball forever."

"Well, don't you ever regret what you did today. I can't officially approve it but—there goes Phil fanning again."

Samboy now addressed the departing warriors.

"All right, boys—last frame and two to the good. All you have to do is hold 'em."

Now it appeared that Phil had been saving the finest joke of all for the end. The season was over and he could take liberties with his arm. He dug his warts and bumps and calluses into the horsehide and proceeded to retire the side with three straight strike-outs, nine rowdy laughs, two informal dances and an incredible noise that was a hideous parody on song.

But it was an altered and sobered Phil who found his old coach after the game and received his fervent congratulations.

"Were you worried, Phil?" Mr. Huckley asked.

"Yes, but I was glad they let me play. I had so much fun I forgot my trouble."

"What trouble, Phil?"

"Well, I got a letter from father this morning and my Dolly is terribly sick. Seems she got hold of an old paint can some place. Cows like to lick paint, you know, and it's deadly poison. They don't think Dolly will live. Maybe I left a can of paint somewhere myself. That's what bothers me."

"Listen, Phil. I was supposed to tell you but you got away too quick. Your father telephoned me this morning. Dolly's out of danger. She's doing fine."

"Oh, boy!" cried Phil and his eyes shone with tears.

Down in the field the Sparta students, led by the band, were circling the stadium in that parade of victory which must follow every triumph over Athens.

"There'll be plenty more ball games," said Phil, "but there'll never be another cow like Dolly."

QUESTIONS

List the details that show Phil was a born pitcher.

What were Phil's accomplishments at Tamarack School? at Branford? at Sparta?

Are Phil's preferred high school subjects, his success in baseball, and his devotion to Dolly well combined to make him seem a real boy?

Where did he acquire the title, "The Milk Pitcher"?

What mistakes did Phil make in dealing with Donnigan? Do you like Donnigan? Was the rebellion against him a just one? What became of him?

What American locality is represented in this story? Give reasons for your answer.

Write a story of 500 to 1,000 words in which you picture a boat race, a horse race, a baseball game, or a football game. If you prefer tennis or marbles, write about a contest on the tennis court or in the marble ring.

STORIES ABOUT YOUTH AND SPORTS

Sherwood Anderson, "I'm a Fool" (reprinted many times; for example, in *The Best Short Stories of 1922,* edited by E. J. O'Brien, Dodd, Mead & Co.; and in *Short Stories for College Classes,* edited by Blanche Colton Williams, D. Appleton & Co.).

Robert A. Bachmann, "Average 1000 Per Cent" (*American Magazine,* June, 1919).

Irvin S. Cobb, "Cinnamon Seed and Sandy Bottom" (*Those Times and These,* Geo. H. Doran Co.).

Richard Harding Davis, "Midsummer Pirates," "The Great Tri-Club Tennis Tournament," "The Story of a Jockey" (*Stories for Boys,* Chas. Scribner's Sons).

Ernest Hemingway, "My Old Man" (*The Best Short Stories of 1923,* edited by E. J. O'Brien, Dodd, Mead & Co.).

Lawrence Perry, "The Spoiled Boy," "Nothing but a Prayer," "A Matter of Loyalty" (*For the Game's Sake,* Chas. Scribner's Sons.) "A Matter of Loyalty" is reprinted in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1920, Doubleday.

Pelham G. Wodehouse, "The Purity of the Turf" (*Jeeves,* Geo. H. Doran Co. Reprinted in *Georgian Stories,* 1924, G. P. Putnam's Sons).

William Almon Wolff, "Thalassa! Thalassa!" (*Everybody's Magazine,* July, 1922).

PELE VERSUS UNCLE SAM

BY

GRACE BROOKS CONNER

Grace Brooks Conner

Grace Brooks Conner was born in Oberlin, Ohio. The greater part of her school life was spent in Chicago; later, she went to a Normal School in Colorado, took courses at Washington University, and studied short story writing at Columbia University. She is a teacher of primary grades in Tacoma, Washington. Recently a year's leave enabled her to teach in a native school in Hawaii, where she gathered material for a number of stories, including this one about Pele. Her Evening Stories occasionally appear in the Chicago *Daily News*.

PELE VERSUS UNCLE SAM[1]

KILA stood by the roadside wrapped in the warm Hawaiian night. But the boy shivered.

His brown hands clenched in his pockets and his brown eyes peered over his shoulder in furtive misery at the pulsing glow in the sky.

More than a hundred miles away on the Kona side of the island of Hawaii, Pele, goddess of fire, had deserted her "House" in Kilauea's yawning pit. And now, because many of her children had abandoned her rites she was venting her wrath in a river of molten fire that was making its relentless way down green slopes to the sea.

Pele is never suddenly devastating. When from long silences, she emerges in lava and smoke and fire, no one considers escape. All, by any power at command, hurry to spend days and nights watching the changing wonder, the awful beauty of the fiery pageant.

Headlights of all the cars on the island would be turned toward Kona. It should not be impossible then, for Kila in Kohala to get a lift down to the main road that circles the island; maybe even to Hilo. But that would not be so probable, Hilo being on the other side of the island from the flow.

A stream of light shot along the road in front of him and a huge car swung around the curve. Kila

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[1] Here first published. By special arrangement with the author.

leaped toward it. The car stopped, headlights quivering.

"Hello there, m' lad," shouted a rumbling voice.

"Ai-yah! Mr. Followe, I not know this your car. I got plenty nerve, hold up Kona sheriff," laughed the boy as he sprang in. "You go to Hilo?"

"No. I've got to get right back to Kona. But I can take you as far as Waimea."

"All right. *Mahalo.*[1] I get ride from there. I got to get to Hilo." Then with a troubled sidewise look at his big companion, "Special police sent out from there. I be special police at lava flow."

"You?" Ben Followe turned quickly, the beginning of one of his great laughs well on the way, but sobered instantly at the look of terrified appeal in the dog-like brown eyes. "That's no place for a kid, herding that bunch of fool tourists all crazy to get as close as they can to the 'real red-hot lava.'" He drawled it out disgustedly. "Or maybe," with one lifted eyebrow, "you're going to guard Pele from their influence."

Kila looked back uneasily, as they topped a small rise, to where the sullen red glow tinged the soft tropical sky.

"Pele sure *huhu,*"[2] he half whispered. Followe felt him tremble against his arm. "She plenty *huhu.* She *bust* the mountain open. She come *qu-ee-k* down the side. She burn all houses, trees, cattle. She—"

"But look here, Kila. You don't believe in that old lady. You've been brought up in an American church, in an American school. Why, kid, you stand up

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[1] *Ma ha' lo*—thank you.
[2] *Hu' hu*—angry.

every morning and say the Flag Salute. That old Pele fairy-tale died when the rest of the gods were pulled down. And now you talk as if she might reach out and grab a fellow by the feet any minute."

"I know, Mr. Followe." The boy's head hung. He poked at a hole in his overalls. "All *Haoles* [1] say Pele dead—teachers—everybody. But," the head came up with a jerk, the eyes flashed, "there she *is*. She come out of mountain. Everybody see her."

"Good Lord!" gasped the white man. "You modern *Kanakas* [2] are sure one fine dish of hash. Well, what are you going to do about it? What if the old lady does go on a tear and parade up and down her own particular preserve a bit? Do you think she'll go scooting back home and *pau* [3] just because you appear on the scene?"

"No, not for me. I no could do that. But—"

"But what?" The white man's eyes narrowed on the gleaming road ahead. He waited, quietly cautious.

"Somebody could—stop her. Somebody— Oh, Mr. Followe, you not been back often since you lived here. You remember Leilani, pr-e-t-ty little girl—?" The miles flew and lurched by under the wheels while his halting tale came out.

Leilani, because her father, her mother, "all people" had *gone make,* [4] had been taken across the mountains to Kona to live with an uncle. Kila had crouched in the corner of the hibiscus hedge so that no one should see him, for hours after the car had taken her away.

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[1] *Ha' o les*—white people.
[2] *Kah nah' kahs*—Hawaiians (applies only to men).
[3] *Pau*—stop.
[4] *Gone ma' ke*—died.

Leilani, always his playfellow, had laughed on every breeze and pleaded from every shadow in the months since she had been gone. Yet the mountains were between them. And one did not make that trip every week.

He had sent many letters saying that he would come for her when he was out of school and earning money. She had written many times. She was homesick.

How could he know till her last hopeless letter that she had had none of his? How could he be sure of what he now suspected—that a somnolent *hapa-haole* [1] postmaster had dozed and drowsed the weeks away with his feet on a box of months' old mail that had never gone out at all?

How had the news traveled? How does news ever travel? Maybe the *mynah* [2] birds had brought it to chatter it rattlingly in early dawn. Perhaps the red-flowered *ohias* [3] had caught it up and passed it on to the *kukui* [4] trees. At the church, only this evening, there had been stifled words, hints of happenings in Kona, forest-fire spread of religious enthusiasm.

To Kila had come what no white person on the island knew—that she had been out on the hills, lonely, thinking of him, wishing for him, when the rocks under her feet had trembled from the wrath born in Pele's mountain.

As she sank to her knees terrified, far away she had seen a great ring of clouds like a *lei* [5] of huge white

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[1] *Ha' pa-ha' o le*—half white.
[2] *My' nah birds*—Australain birds imported into the islands.
[3] *O hi' a*—native flowering tree.
[4] *Ku ku' i*—native nut tree.
[5] *Lei*—wreath of flowers.

flowers hanging over far-off Kilauea. Then a pillar of grey steam writhing into the shape of a woman had arisen from the place of the pit and reached for the *lei*. Again and again she reached to get it. When she failed she sank down once more, and once more the land had rocked to the anger of the goddess.

So Leilani (wreath of heaven), Leilani with the sweet soft eyes, had gone back to tell her uncle that Pele wanted her. On the way she had met the old Hawaiian *Kahuna* [1] who had assured her that it had been a sign, that the whole island would be destroyed if she did not save it. How many times in the past had devotees stayed the wrath of the goddess by sacrificing themselves in her fires? Of late, in compliance with *Haole* prejudice, white roosters and food had been used instead. But was Pele forever to be satisfied with less than her due?

"So she start—she go to throw herself into that lava flow—an' I not know where. Maybe in car, maybe walk. *All* Hawaiians help her. She tabu—what you say 'holy'—sacrifice to Pele. They hide her, not tell me. So I go to get police badge, go to river of fire. Maybe I see her. I not let her do it. Maybe Pele want her—" the voice broke, "but I want her too. She just little kid. She only fourteen." His head went down into cupped hands.

Followe cleared his throat. He shook his great head, blinking vigorously.

"My lad, you give me the willies. You make me think I hear tom-toms beating and priests chanting." He leaned over the wheel. The powerful car was tear-

[1] *Ka hu' na*—native priest.

ing along. The wind roared in the curtains. "Don't I tell you that this is the U. S. A.? We'll put a ring around this island so tight a lizard couldn't get through. Modern thought doesn't take kindly to burnt offerings. When Uncle Sam gets into this—"

The boy flashed a quick sidewise look.

"Uncle Sam? How he help? He too f-a-r away!"

"No, lad, he's closer than you think," Ben smiled rather grimly. "He doesn't always stay in Washington."

"Where he?" The boy glanced around in puzzlement but his look came back to Ben.

"Well, for all practical purposes in this case, he's sitting right beside you."

The brown eyes regarded him a moment, then they gleamed.

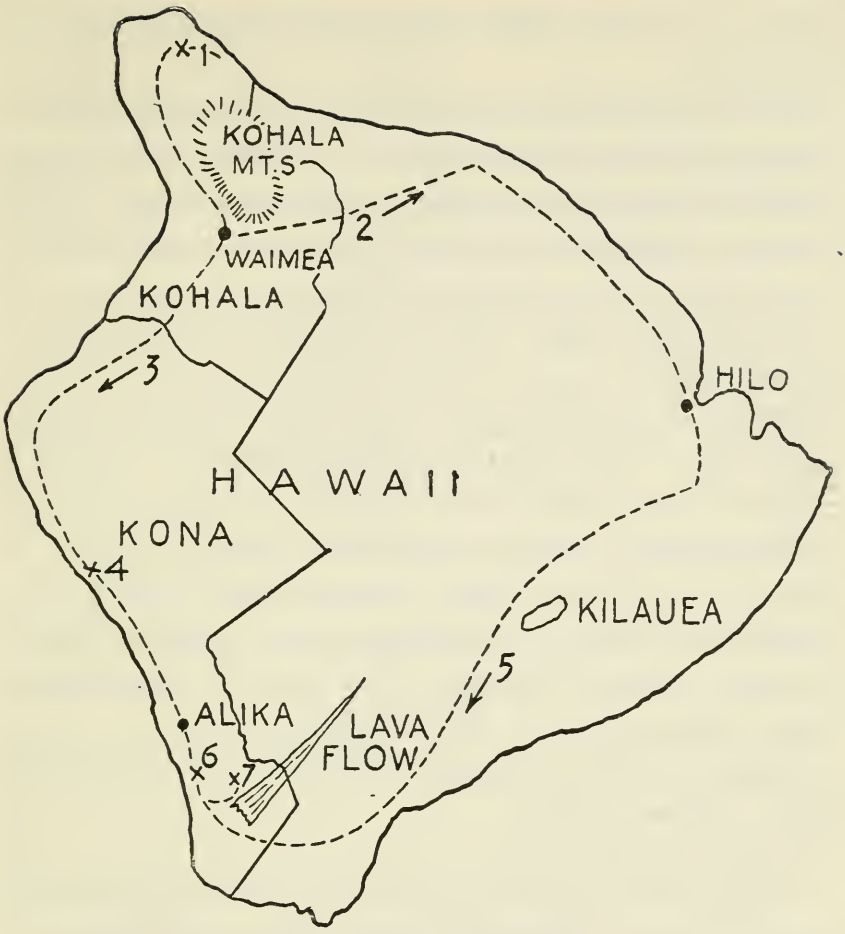
"Ai-yah! I see now, Mr. Followe! You—all police—all soldiers do like Uncle Sam say, so then you be jus' like Uncle Sam. An' Uncle Sam help me find Leilani?"

Ben nodded.

Kila hugged himself. "I start to Hilo for help. I got more now than I think. I not know big Uncle Sam help jus' one *Kanaka* boy."

They stopped in Waimea for Ben Followe to write a letter to the head of the police in Hilo, and Kila, in a hired car, sped off around a third of the island to deliver it.

Ben, sweeping around the Kona road on his third of the circle, planned a bad early morning for his few trusted lieutenants. Telephone and telegraph?—h'm—



1. Where Kila met Followe.
2. Kila's route to Hilo.
3. Followe's route to Kona.
4. Followe's home.
5. Kila's route from Hilo.
6. Where Kila met Ben and Mrs. Followe.
7. Corey's place.

native operators. Well, the letter to Hilo should start something.

He flung into his house and loaded up, stowed extra revolvers in convenient places. Telephone calls commanded certain sleepy persons to appear at once. There was one interruption in the shape of a comfortably rotund figure in a soft gray kimono.

"What's up, Ben? Can't you go to bed after being up all night?"

"Now, Honey, don't you bother me. I never was so rarin' mad! Can't stop to talk. 'Member Leilani—cute little tyke with smoky eyes?"

"In Kohala? Yes," supplied his wife placidly. "I coaxed her in many a time and got her to sing."

"She's over here. Got the notion to sacrifice herself to Pele, to save the island. She's started and nobody knows where she is. I'll find her or—"

When he slid into the car ten minutes later he found Mrs. Followe there.

"Now, Mother—"

"Ben, you may be Law and Order, but I'm a woman. You need me. I'd know Leilani if she had a hump on her back and was painted green. Of course they'll hide her any way they can. I'm coming right along."

She came, sitting far back in the corner behind the curtains, her keen eyes busy.

They traveled slowly. Cautious inquiries of those on the road and alert listening to chance conversations brought no clue. Late in the morning, about four miles from the flow, a weary, hollow-eyed Kila met them, having picked up a driver and snatched a few hours' sleep in the car on the way from Hilo. He

slipped a letter to Ben, cautiously showing a star and a wicked new gun to match.

All day, all day, and they heard nothing. Soldiers appeared along the road, stopped all cars, taking inventory of passengers and issuing pass slips. Kila did some scouting back in the hills, his inability to be in several places at once driving him frantic.

"I think she be hid in the day, up in hills," he concluded at nightfall, "then travel at night. Maybe walk, maybe in car. Not alone—someone with her, maybe *Kahuna*. But all Hawaiians help her. It be *b-i-g* lucky for them to touch her."

And he refused to leave his search for one minute. "Maybe she slip by while I sleep."

Pink, cerise, rose, shifted and glowed the cloud-spattered sky. The inflated sun fell into a sea of palpitant purple ink, his familiar performance all unnoticed, for with the quick tropical darkness, faces yellow, brown and white lifted awed eyes to the rusty glare to the south, the sullen cloud-hung banner of Pele, goddess of fire, angry, imperious, vengeful.

Now it played in waves against the sky, rolling, softly receding. Now it flared and whipped in tongues of turgid yellow as the gliding fiery monster lipped a mighty forest of stately *koa*,[1] silver *kukui*, shaggy tree-fern and, made ravenous by the sampling, enflamed before engulfing it. Billows of smoke-clouds, snuff-brown, screened the reflection in darkness for long moments and then fled upon the trade-winds, shot with flares of orange light. At intervals, down the long miles, wind-blown ashes powdered the road.

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[1] *Ko′ a*—Hawaiian mahogany.

"Permits. Show your papers." Kila jumped upon the running board of one car after another, flashing his star. "How many in this car? (*Leilani, Leilani*) All names, please." "Permits. Have papers?" "Show your permits. (*Leilani, Leilani, Leilani!*) How many in here? All Jake, pass." (*Leilani*—)

On they came, car crowding car, halting, drawling, spurting ahead. One bulging with ukuleles, trailing haunting harmonies along the slumbrous night. One full of bead-eyed Japanese, old, middle-aged and young, chattering. A quartette of drummers larking off their routes, devil-may-care, good-naturedly badgering the guards.

Sandy Scot and impassive Korean; *Pake*,[1] American school teachers, breathlessly eager to feast their mainland eyes on one of Pele's tantrums. Crouching little Filipinos, alert as mice; smoky-eyed Portuguese, white teeth flashing. Life, colorful, careless, in half-awed gala mood, floated and streamed and called back and forth down the road, past an aching heart, a sagging body, red-shot, searching eyes. (*Leilani*—) "Permits? How many in the car?"

Ben Followe drifted up and down, listened, watched, had a quiet word with a guard here, followed a trail there, only to lose it again. He came back to Kila gradually working his way up the road.

"Nothing doing yet. Guards all up the hills at the edge of the flow but they haven't seen a thing. Signal down every half hour. Had anything to eat?"

"No can eat. It stick right here." The boy's hand went to his throat. "Might go by while I eat."

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[1] *Pa' ke*—Chinese.

Ben shuffled two or three chocolate bars out of his pocket.

"Here. Now take the car and go down the road a bit. The Missis is at a little stand getting some coffee. Get to ump-um out of here!" as the boy squared stubbornly into his place. "You'll keel over in your tracks if you don't have something inside you. I'll watch. Beat it!" Kila grabbed the wheel and "beat it."

Mrs. Followe stepped into the car as he stopped. "Hurry," she whispered. "I've heard something. But I won't tell you until you eat."

In the stand he grabbed a paper pail of lavender *poi*,[1] a row of bananas, slapped down a coin and vanished. He whirled the *poi* into his mouth with a practised finger as he ran. In the car he put one corner of the pail to his mouth, tipped it and gulped down the rest. Mrs. Followe reached over from the back seat, peeling bananas.

"In there by the counter—they didn't think I could understand. I couldn't get all they said. I had to keep my back turned and so many chattering all around. But they know what the extra police are for and they are being careful. She's walking—at night. A *Kahuna* is with her, and her aunt."

When they reported to Ben he slid into the car with them.

"Up into the hills, Kila. We'll comb them fore and aft. Douse the lights. We may see something."

All night long they threaded and shuttled, in and up, in and around. They followed roads that wound

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[1] *Poi*—the staple Hawaiian food, a paste made of boiled and pounded taro root, usually gray, sometimes pink or lavender.

down into deep ravines and gullied up again, little more than stream beds. They took turns at driving, watching and snatching naps, only to hurry down in the morning, fearful that she had slipped by in their absence.

The early morning crowds were tense. A stifled excitement ran along the highway.

"She hasn't gone through yet," reported wary guards down the miles.

"Not yet, thank God," breathed Mary Followe in the shadow of the back seat.

"I feel," said Kila turning tortured eyes to hers, "all hollow here," he rubbed his hand over the region of his stomach, "but not hungry."

"That's nerves and exhaustion," and she stood over him in a little roadside shop until he drank three cups of hot cocoa.

In the afternoon a guard stopped them. "A big brown baby went along here pretty well lit up with *'oke'* [1] a minute ago. He yelled something at me about, 'Watch, you dam' *Haole,* an' the third day, the third day—' before another husky crowned him and shoved him down in the bottom of the car. Thought maybe—"

" 'Third day'?" groaned Kila. "Third day from what?" Then he began to check them off. "Day I hear it—yesterday (she not do it yesterday)—today!" He looked at his upraised finger in horror. Then very quietly, "God, don't let me go *pupuli* [2] today, 'cause I got to find her."

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[1] *'Oke.' o ko le ha' o*—a fiery native drink.
[2] *Pu pu' li*—crazy.

An Officer of Importance from Honolulu found them just then.

"Everything is being done," he assured Ben Followe. "The guards have just been increased. Marines have replaced the native police in every accessible point along the flow. They are so close together that they can call to each other. Still—" He took Ben away with him in his car.

"Kila," Mary Followe leaned forward, "when the *Kahuna* finds the guards bristling all over the hills he'll bring them down to the road, won't he? Wouldn't he think that we wouldn't be expecting them here? Well, then," to the boy's thoughtful nod, "we'd better work as far as we can up toward that last oil station and I can stay there. You can hear lots of things at an oil station."

Her quiet matter-of-fact way steadied him. When he left her after parking the car he turned up to her eyes a twisted smile of gratitude. Her hand fell for a moment on his shoulder.

"Bless you, lad. You're brave and fine, all through. We'll find her. We'll surely find her in time."

"Brown or white, what's the difference?" she asked herself as he swung into the road. "Dear God, don't let him fail."

Kila, on running boards, worked his way forward, letting no car pass him by. The flow was within eighty feet of the road. The front of it loomed, a huge clinker hill bulging in the middle, far above the heads of the adventurous crowd. Heat in steady waves was beating them back. Guards were doing their best to keep them at a safe distance.

As Kila looked a gigantic boulder, quivering red underneath, rolled to the top, poised there a moment trembling on the edge, toppled, crashed and, blackening everything in its path, came to rest in a little hollow. There it lay like a great glowing ruby in an ever-widening circle of searing green. Calm, unhurried, with a horrible, conclusive forward pushing, the wall of the flow came on. It met a giant coco palm, slanting in swooping grace to the smoking sky, ran up its side a little way and held it an instant before the great tree crashed in flashing flame.

A little to one side the boy scrambled up a slight rise and climbed a tree. From there he could search the crowd. Back and forth, over and across went his anxious gaze. He scanned them in rows, then back in columns. Leilani was not there.

Across the flow like a bright-hued scarf flung along the hills stood another crowd watching. And between them the fiery "river" seethed—twisting red near the edge, leaping white in the middle, spurting in fountains, hissing in whirlpools. Surely, the mighty bronze goddess was boiling incandescent red taffy and pouring it out to cool on the green hills of *Hawaii Nei*.[1]

Kila slid down from his outlook and worked his way through the crowd with no mind for either the heat or the grandeur. On—on—inch by inch, implacably advancing—came the mighty resistless wall. (*Leilani, little Leilani—.*) With the memory of that liquid ghastliness burned behind his eyes he staggered back to the road. Riding when he could, stopping every vehicle, at last he returned to Mrs. Followe.

[1] *Hawaii Nei*—a term of pride and endearment—dear Hawaii

At the oil station a big brown fellow was fussing over a car. He kept looking over his shoulder toward the smoky sky, in his eyes a fanatic gleam. Kila made sure his star was covered and crept up to him.

"You think she come?" he breathed in pleading Hawaiian, craftily desperate. "She get through?"

The big one looked down. The anguish in the brown eyes seemed to guarantee a terror to match his own.

"Sure she come," he whispered. "No could get through, walking up there." He waved an arm toward the hills. "So they come down. She in car now. Already pass Alika."

"Kila!" called Mrs. Followe startlingly, and he was beside her in a flying leap. "That car! The big blue one." His hands flashed on key and wheel. The engine roared; they curved into the road.

"It stopped only a moment. The guard barely glanced in. But I saw a cheek, a wisp of hair—something—I don't know what, through the back."

Kila, bent forward, eyes steady, took the car rocking, careening, dodging down the crowded road, surely under the protection of Providence. One mile—perspiration stood out on his forehead, his lips. Two miles. Around a curve a guard stopped the fleeing car, its hood propped up to cool the engine. The road, at that place, happened to be otherwise empty.

Kila swerved out and stalled his car across their way.

"Permits!" he cried, tumbling out and gripping their door. "How many? What their names?" His eyes took in two of his countrymen on the front seat and delved into the gloomy, curtained rear.

The pass was handed out. He did not see it. In the back seat, huddled in the arms of a woman was a little figure wrapped in a man's old coat. The driver thrust the pass in Kila's face. The woman leaned forward crooning.

"My little boy so sick," she moaned, "so mu-ch sick. You Hawaiian, you know if I take him to eat leaf—stick—blackened in living fire he not die."

"No, I not know that. I see that sick boy," demanded Kila, reaching for a fold of the coat.

"Don't let them take you in," prompted Mrs. Followe's voice firmly.

"Ai-*yah!* No, no!" cried the woman sharply. "He—" The car rolled ever so little toward the side of the road.

Kila sprang, reached under the hood, got a fistful of wires and jerked.

"You're covered," came Mary Followe's voice cheerfully from the other car. "Sit still." A small blue-steel cylinder poked out between the back curtains.

The driver put his hands on the wheel and sat rigid. The other gasped, a sickly green.

"What's the ruckus?" came a hail, and Ben Followe with the Officer of Importance nosed in beside them.

"Leilani!" sobbed Kila, and tore away the cloak.

She crouched terrified in the woman's arms, dressed in a boy's faded overalls and torn shirt, her curly hair cut close around her ears.

"Let me go! Let me go!" she moaned as Kila sprang in and snatched her into his arms.

Ben Followe covered the woman. "Don't move," he directed crisply. She cowered back into the seat.

"Kila! Kila!" cried Leilani, struggling until he could hardly hold her. "I must go. *Must* go! All island sink, I not go. At sunset—at sunset. Oh, Kila—" Her voice rose to a shriek. Her hands beat at him frenziedly.

Haggard and grim-lipped, Kila only held her tighter. Snatching up the coat he wound it around her, head and all, and carried her, still struggling, to the Followes' car.

Another car drew up from the rear, halted, backed and gave evidence of hurried departure. The face of the driver, a face familiar to Kila, turned backward in gray apprehension. The man in the oil station!

"Get him!" cried the boy. "He talked to me. Knew all about it. Maybe he got *Kahuna* in with him."

Ben Followe jumped and caught him on the turn. He waved a guard forward. "Ride with him," he directed, "and see that he sits pretty. You were right, kid," he told Kila as he climbed into his own car and started it. "There was a mighty blue old party on that back seat."

The two men and the woman were transferred to the car of the Officer of Importance. Two marines on his rear seat were invited to ride on the running board.

On the first crossroad, the procession turned up into the hills. "I wouldn't risk taking you two along that road, Kila," Ben explained. "Not till after sunset, anyway. It might be that nothing would happen. But this is safer."

So quickly had the capture been made that not a car had passed; yet before they made the next turn the absence of the blue car from the highway had been

noted, and two came creeping up the hill in their wake, to be followed by more and still more.

Higher they went, twisting and turning, ever higher. Hot ashes blew in their faces. Suddenly the cars rounded a jutting shoulder of rock and there spread before them gleamed the flow, the middle stream tossing smoky white lace-work high into the quivering air.

Heat billowed toward them. The cars crawled, drivers and passengers alike awed, submerged for the moment in the awful immensity of the display. Their gaze traveled up the glittering fiery torrent to where disappearing, winding, reappearing between blackened banks through the green hills, far up toward its source it was lost, a red-gold thread, in screening smoke.

As they looked the flow leaped and crackled. Angry boomings came from beneath, the surface heaved, parted and from the red gash of the opening came black smoke and white steam. A cloud of hot ashes swept around them.

Opposite, a great piece of the cliff, undermined, broke away with a splitting crash and fell roaring, to disappear in the sucking red tide beneath.

Wordlessly they passed the place. Kila shivered. Leilani's muffled sobs came faintly from under the coat.

"Are you going to Nate Corey's place?" Mrs. Followe asked. Ben nodded. "Quickest place to get to off the road. He's gone but his Chink will be there. We all need a rest. Toughest two days I ever put in. That poor devil of a kid looks like a rag and I should think you'd be dead. You're a wonder, Mother. Know it?"

Mary Followe smiled. "You're kinda wonderful yourself, Ben."

And Leilani, still resisting with all her small might, twisted out of her wrappings.

"Kila, Kila, let me go! *Must* go! Pele want me. She angry. Much *huhu!* Kila, I tell you all island blow up at sundown—sink in sea, you not let me go!"

The shadows were lengthening.

Kila put his face gently down to the hot wet cheek.

"*Huapala,*[1] little *huapala,*" the loving-tender old word came like singing from his lips, "you think I let you go? You think I let you kill best thing in all the world—to me? Pele not need you. I do. Anyway, she not get you. Uncle Sam say, 'No.' Uncle Sam bigger than Pele."

"Oh—oh!" sobbed Leilani, her mouth quivering. "You love me, Kila, you love me—let me go!"

The boy trembled, but his arms only closed the tighter.

They came to the Corey place, and turned in past a huge flagpole at the gate.

The Officer of Importance strode to the telephone. Mrs. Followe led Kila into the cool white bedroom where he laid Leilani on the wide white bed.

"I'll try and feed her, lad, and then get her to sleep. You go tell the Chinaman to get us all something hot to eat."

Kila sped to the kitchen and then back to post himself outside the window of Leilani's room.

He sagged against the casing. He could hear Leilani sobbing and begging inside, could hear Mary Followe's steady voice in answer. Out on the broad *lanai*[2] Ben

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[1] *Hu' a pa' la*—sweetheart.
[2] *Lan ai'*—porch, verandah.

Followe and the Officer of Importance were talking. Their voices sounded in a grumbling blur.

In spite of himself his eyelids closed. His head fell back against the clapboards. But an uneasy frown creased his forehead. Leilani was crying. Who was bothering her? Why should anyone make her cry?

Suddenly he started, wide awake, at a swift rush of feet inside. He braced himself just in time to spring as the French window burst open. "Ben!" came Mary Followe's cry. Chairs scraped on the *lanai.* Leilani flashed past, eyes terrified, breath coming in catches. For a moment the boy raced beside her, then stumbled to one knee and dragged her down with him. A truckful of guards was unloading at the front gate.

"Kila!" gasped the girl, "the sky—the sky!" She was panting for breath.

Kila could see the sky. It was turning red. North, south and east the reflection brightened until it was hard to say where the sun would set.

"I must go!" She twisted and writhed.

"Sky not matter," gritted Kila between set teeth, bracing her hard against his knee. "Let sun go down. Tomorrow you see. Tomorrow I laugh at you, Leilani. An' I *not* let you go."

"Can you hold her, Sonny?" asked the Officer of Importance pausing on his way to the gate.

"Always," cried Kila, head thrown back, hair windblown. "Always an' forever." He laughed a shaken, exultant laugh.

And then, though his arms still held, his blood turned to water.

A sound began in the darkening forest on three sides of the house—a sound that rose thinly and swelled, falling to rise again. A few at first, then voice after voice took it up until the place was ringed with the pulsing vibrations of ultimate horror, the keening of transcendent misery.

Mary Followe appeared on the *lanai,* her face ashy, and went into her husband's arms. "Ben, what *is* it?"

"Wailing," he explained, "for the dead. I heard it once before you came. Never forget it. They evidently expect everybody to cash in tonight. Oh, damn 'em, they're beginning again."

The sky flamed. The great cry swelled. And out on the lawn a double battle swirled and swept around Kila's head.

Leilani stiffened in his arms. "Pele, Pele," she prayed in a tense terrible calm. "Pele, great mother of our islands, come and take me." Kila's flesh prickled as he watched her, eyes closed, lips deliberate, forceful. "I would come, oh Pele, but I am kept. Send thy fires upon me. Take me to serve forever in thy House of Everlasting Fire." And as if this were not enough, the blood of his fathers within him rose up and answered the terrible cry in the forest.

His whole spirit reeling, his eyes closed for a moment. What did he want? Why was it so hard to think? His arms felt as if they did not belong to him. But he must hold on. *There was something he must not let go.*

A sound beat upon him, softly, paralyzingly insistent. "Pele, Pele—" Another, from farther away, flailed

and crushed him, louder, louder. But something— A prayer! He must say a prayer.

How did it go? What was the first word? He had learned many in the little church on the hill where his father made him go on Sunday. Where were they now?

If that shuddering noise would only stop. He tried to think of "Our Father." They said that every morning at school. School! And his lips began to move, slowly, haltingly, " 'Flag of our great republic—' "

"Pele, Pele!"

" '—guardian of—our homes—' " the island Flag Salute. It steadied him, nerved him. His hold tightened.

Somebody in his arms broke into the chant of sacrifice. Two guards were pacing slowly across the front lawn.

" 'We, the children of many lands, who find rest—rest—under thy folds—' " Surely, surely the sky was on fire!

There was an immense whirring somewhere. In his head, probably.

" '—find rest—' " Rest? There was no rest. That whirring— He jerked his heavy head upward, bewildered, trying to shake the confusing sound out of his ears.

"Leilani!" he cried, "Leilani!" He shook her eyes open. "I tell you—I *tell* you!" A huge army plane sailed out above them, the big U. S. gleaming in the last rays of the setting sun. "I tell you Uncle Sam bigger than Pele!"

He hugged her close, his cheek against hers, his free arm wildly pointing.

The sun dropped. The wailing hesitated, fluttered, ceased.

Up swooped the plane, across the moon just misting into silver and on into the sky-flare of Pele's wrath. "See?" cried Kila. "Sun set. We still here, even if sun do set. Island not sink. I tell you Uncle Sam boss all right. He ple-n-ty tell Pele where to head in."

A wind, crackling across the hills, took the big flag at the top of the pole and spread it out above their heads.

With a tired sigh Leilani relaxed. A moment he held her. Then their heads drooped. Exhaustion took them where they sat. Healthy young nerves untangled in the blessed relief of sleep.

Ben Followe and the Officer of Importance came out and carried them in.

QUESTIONS

Study the map on page 65 and observe where Kila met Followe. Why did he wish to go to Hilo?

Who is Pele? What sacrifices to Pele were made before the enlightenment of the Hawaiians? Point out Kilauea on the map.

Where was the sheriff going and where would he drop Kila? See the map.

Who was Leilani? What was the story Kila told Followe as the car covered the miles?

What had Leilani's name to do with the ring of clouds over Kilauea? What was the *Kahuna's* part in her determination to sacrifice herself? Why would the Hawaiians help her? What would Uncle Sam do?

What is the meaning of "tabu"? How is the word sometimes used in America?

What did Followe do in Waimea? What, at his own home?

Give a characterization of Mrs. Followe.

Tell how Kila searched for Leilani, and how the Followes aided him.

Why was the road thronged with cars? Name some of the nationalities represented.

How on the third day did Kila know that Leilani did "not do it yesterday"?

Describe the lava flow as you imagine it.

Tell how Mrs. Followe and Kila finally found Leilani.

Why did the rescuers turn up into the hills on the first cross-road?

Point out Corey's place, on the map.

Why did Leilani try to escape? How did Kila again save her?

What tumult arose in the boy's own soul while he struggled to hold the girl?

What effect had the wailing on Kila? Mary Followe? Ben?

How did Uncle Sam come to Kila's rescue? Is it logical that the boy repeated the island Flag Salute?

Why is Kila's final remark humorous?

If this story interests you, write a paper telling why. If you are not interested, tell why.

Recall all the Hawaiian words you can and give the meaning of each.

OTHER STORIES OF THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS

Lee Foster Hartman, "The Judgment of Vulcan" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1920, Doubleday).

Jack London, "The Sheriff of Kona," "Koolau the Leper," "Aloha Oe" (*The House of Pride,* Macmillan Co.); "The House of Mapuhi," "The Heathen," "The Seed of McCoy" (*South Sea Tales,* Macmillan Co.); "A Son of the Sun," "The Proud Goat of Aloysius Pankburn (*A Son of the Sun,* Doubleday); "The Water Baby" (*On the Makaloa Mat,* Macmillan Co.).

Somerset Maugham, "Red," "The Pool," "Honolulu" (*The Trembling of a Leaf,* Geo. H. Doran Co.).

Gilbert Parker, "Cumner's Son," "An Epic in Yellow," "Derelict," "My Wife's Lovers," "A Pagan of the South" (*Cumner's Son,* Harper & Bros.).

JOHN RUSSELL, "Jetsam," "The Fourth Man," "The Price of the Head" (*The Red Mark,* Alfred A. Knopf); "The One-Eyed Devil," "The Witch Woman" (*In Dark Places,* Alfred A. Knopf).

RALPH STOCK, "The Rivercomber," "Dead Reckoning," "The Mangrove Man," "Worth While" (*Uncharted Waters,* Doubleday).

WILBUR DANIEL STEELE, "The Shame Dance" (Title story, Harper & Bros.).

ON PIXIE HILL

BY

RICHMAL CROMPTON

Richmal Crompton

Richmal Crompton is the pen name of Richmal Crompton Lamburn, a young Englishwoman who lives in Kent. She sends the following information about herself:

"My father was a clergyman in a small manufacturing town just outside of Manchester. I was educated at St. Elphine, a boarding school on the Derbyshire moors near Matlock, and at Royal Holloway College near Windsor. I took my degree in Classics there and for some years combined the careers of teaching and writing. A few years ago I had an illness which left me too lame to continue my teaching career and since then have lived with my mother in the country and devoted myself to writing."

Miss Lamburn's works include *Blue Flames, Abbot's End, The House, The Innermost Room, The Hidden Light, The Wildings,* and *Anne Morrison,* various magazine stories, and humorous articles, also the *William* books—collections of humorous stories relating the adventures of a small boy.

ON PIXIE HILL[1]

GEORGE TREWITT climbed Pixie Hill briskly, only once stopping to draw breath before he reached the summit. He was a small, sturdy man of about fifty with the clean-shaved, brick-red, weather-beaten face and keen, blue eyes of the typical countryman. His rather short legs were encased in leather gaiters, and he carried a rough, gnarled walking stick.

He had been over to the next village to see his married sister and was walking home again. His direct road did not lie over the hill, but he liked to come this longer way round in order to stand at the top of the hill and see outspread beneath him mile upon mile of plow land and meadow land, stretching away into the distance as far as the eye could see. It was midsummer now, and a luminous, golden haze lay over the land. In the meadow at the bottom of the hill the cows stood knee-deep in the lush grass.

George Trewitt always sat on the top of the hill for a few minutes, leaning against the single tree that grew there, and smoking his pipe, before he went down the gentler slope on the other side that led to the village where he lived.

He had lowered himself to the ground with a sigh of content and taken out his tobacco pouch before he realized that he was not alone there. Another man about his own age and size was sitting at the other side

[1] *Good Housekeeping*, August, 1929. *Copyright*, Richmal Crompton. Reprinted by permission of the author.

of the tree. His face was weather-beaten and ruddy as George's, but it was framed in stubbly, white side-whiskers. He, too, wore leather gaiters over broadcloth trousers, and an old-fashioned farmer's hat. He was a neighbor and friend of George's and greeted him heartily.

"Well, Garge, come out for to enjoy the sunshine same as me?"

"Aye, William. I be on my way home from Martha's. This be a better way round of a fine day, bain't it? A climb, but well worth it."

The two old men lit their pipes and smoked in silence till suddenly William gave a chuckle.

"What is it?" said George, taking his pipe from his mouth.

"I've just thought of something," said William.

"What?" persisted George, replacing his pipe in his mouth.

"Why, us two—you an' me, Garge—on Pixie Hill on Midsummer's Eve. It ought to be a lad wi' a lass, eh? Not two old 'uns like you and me."

George smiled, quietly enjoying the joke. "They'll be coming out later, I doubt," he said. " 'Tis early yet."

"But 'tis Midsummer's Eve all the same," said William, chuckling, "and 'tis you an' me on Pixie Hill. Us'll have to be keerful not to fall asleep, Garge. They can take you easy if you fall asleep."

"Oh, us'll not be likely to fall asleep," said George.

But the late afternoon was warm, and the air was alive with the somnolent hum of insects. George took his pipe from his mouth and laid it on the grass beside

him. William did the same. Their heads dropped sideways. Neither spoke.

Suddenly George woke up with a start. His start roused William, who also sat up, rubbing his eyes. They looked at each other and smiled sheepishly.

"Well, us dropped off arter all," said William, stretching. "It were the heat and the resting after the climb. Us'd best be getting on perhaps. You be going back home, bain't you, Garge? Shall us go together?"

But George wasn't listening. He was gazing in front of him, his face grown pale beneath its tan, his eyes staring.

William followed the direction of his gaze. His face, too, grew pale, and his eyes bulged. In a low thorn bush close to the ground a tiny man dressed in green was struggling. A thorn had caught his tunic and held it. The little man was stamping with rage as he struggled to free himself. The two men stared at the sight helplessly, paralyzed by amazement.

Then the little man saw them and began to shout to them for help. They heard his tiny voice, faint, thin, and flute-like.

"Help me, can't you? *Help* me, I say!"

They could still do nothing but stare at him, open-mouthed with astonishment.

The little man grew angry. He shook his fist at them. His tiny voice quivered with rage.

"You great louts! HELP me, can't you? HELP me, can't you? I say."

There was something ludicrous about his fury and threatening gestures in face of their great bulk, and the realization of the ludicrousness of it suddenly released

George from his paralysis. He bent forward, put out a large, roughened hand, and gently freed the elf from the detaining thorn.

The elf slipped daintily out of the bush, then, turning round, began to voice his fury again, shaking his fist at it and stamping. "You hateful creatures!" he cried shrilly. "The queen shall know of this. She'll put a blight on you. How dare you touch one of her servants!"

Then he turned to the two men and came straight up to their feet. A cold chill of fear crept over George, as he approached. He swept a courtly bow. George touched his hat in return in a clumsy rustic salute.

"Thank you," said the little man with great dignity and graciousness. "I thank you most sincerely. The queen shall know of your kindness. Meantime I give you each a fairy wish."

Then he spread wings, gauzy and iridescent as a dragonfly's, and floated up into the summer air. In a second he was a mere dot. In another second there was no trace of him at all.

The two old men turned and stared at each other.

"He's—gone," stammered George.

"He—he were there, weren't he?" stammered William.

"Course!" said George. "Didn't you see him and hear him?"

As if by common consent they arose from the ground and began slowly to descend by the path that led to the village. Both were still pale and walked unsteadily as if dazed. Neither of them spoke till they were halfway down the hill.

Then William said, *"Gosh!"* and after another silence: "Did you ever see such a tiny lil' thing? He were one of Them, of course."

"Of course," said George.

"Plenty of spirit, hadn't he?" said William.

"They have," said George.

Then William said slowly, thoughtfully, "What d'you think he meant by a fairy wish?"

"Jest a fairy wish," said George simply. "Jes' exactly what he said. A fairy wish. You wish for a thing, an' it comes true."

"Do you *b'lieve* it, Garge?" said William incredulously.

"Course I do."

"Well, try it. Wish for somethin' now and see if it comes."

"A likely thing to do," said George scornfully, "wasting it afore I've thought of the best thing to wish for. I tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to sit down tonight for a good hour's think, like, before I risk wasting it."

"I reckon I'll ask for money," said William thoughtfully; "money be always useful."

"It be sometimes, and it bain't sometimes," said George. "It don't do to do nothin' in a hurry."

They had reached the village now and were approaching the little cottage where George had lived alone ever since his sister married.

A tall figure in clerical costume was approaching from the opposite direction. It was the Reverend Theophilus Medlowe, sole incumbent of the little country village. He had reached George's gate and, seeing George ap-

proaching, stood there waiting for him. It was evident that he proposed paying George a parochial call.

George slackened his pace, and a guilty look came over his rubicund countenance—such a look as one sees on a schoolboy's face when detected in a misdemeanor. For George had not been to church for four Sundays, and the Reverend Theophilus Medlowe prided himself upon keeping his flock up to the mark. When any of them failed to appear in church for four Sundays running, he always called to demand the reason of their absence.

George was generally a fairly regular attendant at church because, unlike the rest of the congregation, he enjoyed hearing himself sing, but for the last four Sundays he had yielded to the temptation of spending the morning working in his little garden, and he knew that the Reverend Theophilus Medlowe had come to reproach and exhort him. Now, George was by nature a meek little man and never openly contradicted or argued with his pastor, but whenever the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe's reproaches and exhortations became especially exasperating, he would allow himself the satisfaction of muttering sotto voce comments and defiances that he lacked the courage to utter openly. The Reverend Theophilus Medlowe was conveniently deaf.

"Ah, there you are, George," said the Vicar, "there you are! There you are!" The Vicar generally said everything once or twice, so as to give himself time to think of what to say next. "There you are! Just coming home? Good! I was coming in the hopes of a little chat with you. Little chat with you."

"Come in, sir," said George without enthusiasm and

then, fixing pleading eyes on William, "Come on in, William."

He wanted William there, too. William would help to bear the brunt of the attack, so to speak. After all, William hadn't been for two Sundays . . . George had for the time being forgotten the pixie and his fairy wish.

The three of them entered the cottage.

"Now, George," began the Vicar, "you haven't been ill, have you? Haven't been ill—haven't been ill?"

"No, sir," said George, trying to look innocent and mystified, "not as I knows of."

"Though he do suffer wonnerful from rheumatism," put in William with a vague idea of helping things.

"I haven't seen you at church lately," went on the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe, ignoring William. "Not at church, not at church, not at church, George. How's that, George, how's that?"

" 'Cause I ain't been, sir," said George, still keeping up his bold pretence of innocence.

The Reverend Theophilus Medlowe frowned. "Come, come, George," he said, "this won't do. Won't do at all. Won't do. It's your *duty* to come to church. Duty. Four weeks absent. Never do at all. I want you to promise me to come next Sunday, George. You must promise me to come to church next Sunday. You're neglecting your spiritual faculties. Neglecting your spiritual faculties. Why, even the animals use such spiritual faculties as they have. As they have. The very birds utter songs of praise. Songs of praise."

He looked out of the window for inspiration, saw a

cat passing, and continued vaguely, "The very cats—"

"Wish you was one," muttered George under his breath.

Then he found himself gazing not at the Vicar, but at thin air. The Vicar had vanished. He turned to William. William turned to him. They were alone in the room. They gazed in a horror-stricken silence around them, into the corners of the room, out of the window at the empty street, and up at the ceiling. Finally they looked down at the floor on the spot where the Vicar had been standing—

And there sat a large, black cat bearing an elusive but undeniable resemblance to the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe.

George stared at it in helpless horror, while the sweat stood out on his brow. He put up a hand to loosen his collar and continued to stare as though he thought that if he stared long and hard enough the creature would disappear. But though he stared both hard and long, the creature did not disappear. It remained there, looking up at George with an expression of intense surprise. At last George found his voice—a thin, awe-stricken voice, that seemed to belong to some one else.

"Gosh!" he said. "Me fairy wish!"

"Yes," said William in a voice as thin and awe-stricken as George's. "An' you'd only got one. You can't turn him back. That's the worse of fairy wishes. You're apt to use 'em up that way without meaning to. I'm going straight home to have mine now, Garge, before I spoil it, like, without meanin' to same as what you've done."

"But—what about me, William? Surely you be goin' to help me!" pleaded George piteously.

William shook his head. "It ain't no use, Garge. No one can help you. I'm afeared of usin' up my wish unbeknownst, same as what you did, if I stay talkin' much longer. I'll try'n help you as far as I can later."

He went out of the cottage, closing the door behind him.

George stood gazing at the closed door. "Thinkin' of hisself," he said bitterly. "I didn't know William'd be such a mean skunk as that."

He remembered suddenly that he was in the presence of the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe and coughed apologetically. Then, feeling suddenly rather unsteady about the knees, he went over to his chair by the fireplace and sat down. The Rev. Theophilus Medlowe followed him pompously, arching his back, waving his tail, and sat down opposite him, gazing up at him with a sort of dignified expectancy, as if asking him what he was going to do about it.

"I do be sorry, sir," said George hoarsely. "It were a mistake. If so be as I'd got another, I'd turn you back straight away. Surelye, I would, sir."

The Rev. Theophilus Medlowe twitched his tail impatiently, as if waving aside such inadequate excuses. Then the grandfather clock in the corner of the room struck seven, and George remembered that the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe dined at seven. Probably he had been taking a stroll before dinner when he called at the cottage.

The thought aroused George's hospitable instincts.

The Rev. Theophilus Medlowe must be fed. But that raised a somewhat delicate problem. What should he offer the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe? He knew that the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe was not a teetotaler. It seemed an insult to offer milk to a man who, though no wine-bibber, was known to be a good judge of wine and to have a glass every evening with his dinner. George had a bottle of cider in the cupboard. Doubtfully he took it out and held it in his hand, gazing thoughtfully from it to the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe, who was watching him intently from the hearthrug. He couldn't, of course, offer it in a glass and—well, it did seem a bit queer to offer any one a saucerful of cider. The difficulty was that he didn't quite know how much the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe was cat and how much he had remained the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe.

Coming to a sudden decision, George poured out a saucerful of milk and a saucerful of cider and placed them side by side on the floor. By the saucer of cider he placed two or three biscuits. Then he turned and once more gazed at the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe, who was still watching him from the hearthrug. Again he was confronted with the difficulty of knowing exactly how much of the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe was cat.

So he said respectfully, "It's ready, sir," and added coaxingly, "Puss, puss, puss."

The large black cat rose and, with a dignified, jerky gait strongly reminiscent of the Vicar's mode of procedure, walked across to the saucers. He sniffed the cider and, turning from it disdainfully, began to lap

up the milk with every sign of satisfaction. The sight afforded the watching George great relief. When the reverend gentleman had finished his milk, George refilled the saucer. At once a faint—a very faint—grating sound emanated from the metamorphosed cleric. The Rev. Theophilus Medlowe was purring.

George still felt dazed and stupefied. It was all very well giving him a saucer of milk, but what was he going to *do* about it? And suddenly the solution occurred to him. He must make William use his wish to turn the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe back again. Why ever hadn't he thought of it before? William was so determined not to do anything hastily that probably he wouldn't have used his wish yet. If he hurried, he'd catch him before he used it.

There was no time to be lost. George took his hat from behind the door, put it on his head, then turned to look hesitatingly at his new pet. He must, of course, make sure that the Vicar was all right before he went. The Vicar seemed quite all right. He had finished the milk and gone back to the hearthrug. He was sitting there in front of the fire, washing his face. He looked comfortable and placid. He was evidently growing more accustomed to his state and had decided to make the best of it.

George opened the door and again stood hesitatingly on the threshold. Then he cleared his throat and said respectfully,

"I won't be long away, sir." And then added more familiarly, "I'll be back soon, Puss."

Then he hastened as quickly as he could down the road to William's cottage.

He found William sitting at the kitchen table, gazing open-mouthed and open-eyed at a shabby, brown-leather bag.

"William," panted George, "I've come to beg a favor of you. Take me as an example of what happens to them as uses fairy wishes for themselves and—the Lard knows what I be goin' to do about that cat! William, you've not used your wish yet—"

"But I have, Garge," interrupted William breathlessly, "I have. I used it just now. Just the minute afore you came in."

"What did you wish for, William?"

"I wished for a hundred thousand pounds, Garge."

For a minute George struggled for breath. Then he said, "An' did you get it?"

William took out a red-spotted handkerchief and mopped his damp brow. "I don't rightly know, Garge," he whispered. "As soon as I wished the wish, this here bag came on the table. Sudden-like. Out of nowhere."

"What's in it?" said George hoarsely.

"I haven't opened it, Garge. You comed in soon as it appeared. Garge," he cowered back as if terrified, "open it. I daresn't. I tell you, I daresn't."

Fearfully George stretched out a hand to the bag and undid the catch. It fell open, showing a tight mass of wads of bank-notes fastened round with elastic bands. All William's fear vanished. He leaped upon them exultantly.

"It's the money. It's the money, Garge. It's me hundred thousand pounds."

"There's letters on the bag, William," said George

slowly, tracing with his fingers a half-obliterated B. H. upon the brown leather. "Be it fairy marks?"

"What matters it what it be?" said William. "It's money, Garge. It's a hundred thousand pounds."

George sighed. "Well," he said, "some has all the luck. I were coming round to ask you to use your wish to turn the Vicar back for me. I've never been placed so awkward in all my life before, William."

With a great effort William brought his mind back from his hundred thousand pounds to George's problem.

"I don't know but what you bain't better off with him as he is now, Garge. He'd be so tremendous angry if he was turned back. He'd have the law on you sure as eggs is eggs. I'm not sure," thoughtfully, "but what it don't amount to manslaughter. Turnin' folks into cats."

George turned pale. "You know it were a mistake, William, an'—"

"Who'll believe it were a mistake?"

"I don't believe it's ag'in the law anyway."

"Well, if it ain't that, it's ag'in the Bible. Witchcraft an' such-like's mentioned in the Bible."

"What about you, William?"

"I've jus' got a bit of money for myself without inconveniencing no one," said William virtuously. "I haven't gone about turnin' people into hanimals."

"An' I always looked on you as a friend, William—" said George bitterly.

"Now, don't let's quarrel, Garge," said William. "Us can't afford to quarrel. Us'll need each other's help. I'll help you all I can. About your cat, I say

you be safe with it as a cat, Garge. A tur'ble time be comin' to you if ever it gets back. An' take care of it, Garge. Don't let no dogs get near it. I've heered tell that if they're killed, they turn back."

"What!" gasped George.

"Aye," said William calmly, "if so be as a dog killed your cat tomorrow, it wouldn't turn into a dead cat, it'd turn into the Vicar's corpse."

"Gosh!" breathed George.

"An' they'd hang you for murder."

"An' if it dies natural?" said George breathlessly. "It must die natural sometime, however keerful I be of it, William."

"Then it turns into the Vicar's corpse, too. Whensoever it dies. An' you'll have a lot to explain then, Garge."

George mopped his brow again and reached out unsteadily for his hat. "I'd best be goin' back to see it's all right then, William," he said.

"Aye, you'd best," agreed William. "I'll just be countin' this through, then I'll bury it in the garden."

George almost ran back to his cottage, so anxious was he for the safety of his visitor. He opened the door and looked quickly round the little kitchen. It was all right. His visitor was curled up in the middle of the cushion in George's chair, fast asleep.

George came in and shut the door with a sigh of relief. His relief, however, was soon drowned in discomfort. The chair on which his guest was reclining was the only comfortable one in the room and the one on which it was George's custom to sit in the evenings. The other three were hard, uncomfortable kitchen

chairs. George made a tentative effort to lift the slumbering clergyman gently from his chair on to the floor without rousing him, but the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe twitched angrily in his sleep and shot out a paw, as if annoyed by the liberty taken, and George replaced him and returned hastily to his kitchen chair.

He went to bed early, but he could not sleep.

He came downstairs in the night several times to make sure that his guest was quite comfortable. Once he made up the fire lest he should be cold, and another time he put a saucer of milk on the hearthrug in case he should wake up hungry. George had been brought up to show respect to the cloth.

The next day the village was alive with the news of the Vicar's disappearance. Excited groups gathered together in the road, discussing it animatedly. It seemed that he had set off from the Vicarage for a short walk just before dinner and had not returned. They had telegraphed to his only surviving relative—an elderly aunt—and were making inquiries along the railway line, as well as searching the countryside. The generally accepted theory was that he had lost his memory.

The unhappy George spent the day indoors, sitting upon the uncomfortable kitchen chair and anxiously watching his guest. His guest seemed to have settled down remarkably well. He seemed, in fact, perfectly happy and comfortable. It was as if he had at last solved the whole problem of life. The solution consisted in lying curled up on a cushion in front of a large fire, dozing and sleeping and stretching and feeding on sardines and cream. For George had opened a tin of

sardines for the Vicar's breakfast, and the Vicar had eaten them with obvious relish. Moreover, having once tasted cream, the Vicar now refused to look at milk, and George had to sally forth continually for fresh supplies of cream.

Once the Vicar, on returning from his saucer, found that George had ventured to occupy his chair, whereupon he uttered an imperious mew in a tone so reminiscent of the Rev. Theophilus Medlowe's voice when annoyed that George leaped precipitately out of the chair and did not presume to occupy it again. George could not help suspecting that the Vicar was beginning to enjoy his metamorphosed state. As a man he had never known such luxurious comfort. No duties, no responsibilities, no demands upon his time or mental faculties, the most comfortable suit of clothes he'd ever had in his life, nothing but sleep and warmth and comfort and strange, delicious food. George couldn't help sighing enviously when he compared their lots.

He had not dared to leave his cottage that day except for hurried visits to the nearest farm for the Vicar's cream. He was afraid lest his guilt should show upon his countenance and betray him to the groups who still stood along the road, discussing the Vicar's mysterious disappearance. He would have liked to run across and see William, but he daren't even do that. He thought wistfully of William—William peacefully counting over his new-found wealth with no metamorphosed pillar of the Church on his hands.

But toward evening William came in to see him. William carried an evening paper in his hand and did not look so happy or carefree as George had expected

him to look. He thrust out the paper to George with a "Read that!"

George put on his spectacles and read slowly and deliberately. " 'Mysterious Disappearance of Country Vicar.' "

"No, no," said William impatiently. "Not that! The next column."

George turned to the next column and read as slowly and as deliberately (George was not a fluent reader). " 'Cashier Robs Bank and Absconds'— What's 'absconds' mean, William?"

"Runs off," said William still impatiently. "Go on."

" 'Found Dead in Wrecked Car,' " went on George, syllable by syllable. " 'No Trace of Booty. Police Searching Neighborhood.' "

"There!" said William, taking the paper from him. "An' if you go on reading you'll see that he'd got the money in an old brown bag with B. H. on, and that his car was broke up on the road just near by here with runnin' into one of those there telegraph poles, but they didn't find no money. They say as how some one must have come along an' found him dead an' took his money. That's the money They give me, Garge," ended William, his hardly retained calm dissolving into panic. "That's the bag They give me an' all. That's the bag I buried in my back garden last night. What'm I goin' to do? 'Tis a tur'ble thing to happen to a upright man like me."

"Have you spent any of the money," said George.

"Aye. One note. I took it down to Bilcaster this morning. 'Tis the last I'll be able to spend, Garge, an' I'll be lucky if they don't put me in prison for it. *Me!*

Me what's acted sidesman while Ben Lard were ill."

"Well," said George slowly and not without a certain secret unregenerate relish, "us are both in a bad way now, William, as you might say, me an' my cat, an' you an' your money."

"*You* be all right," said William impatiently. "So long as you keep him a cat, no suspicion can come to you. They be dragging the pond for him now. But *me—me* to be put in prison at my time of life, an' respected, too, as I am, an' no one to protect me." He glanced surlily at George. "An' not even the Vicar to speak for my character, what with you turnin' him into a cat."

But William had been wrong when he said that no suspicion could attach itself to George. A well-intended neighbor called that very evening to inform him with a certain amount of satisfaction that people were "talking." And they were talking about George. Mrs. Miggs and Mrs. Truefit and Mr. Tranler and many other village worthies all swore to seeing the Vicar pass along the road from the Vicarage to the village at about seven o'clock on the night of his disappearance. Mrs. Blobs, who kept the general shop, had seen him enter George's cottage and, though she waited till after nine, had not seen him emerge. In fact, no one had seen the Vicar after his visit to George. The groups began to assemble in the vicinity of George's cottage, watching it suspiciously and making audible remarks about "them as kills defenceless old men for their money." Mrs. Banks, who was deaf and nearly blind, said that she thought she'd seen George dragging a dead body down to the river that night, but couldn't be quite sure.

Poor George watched anxiously from behind his Nottingham lace curtains and pots of geraniums, while the Vicar, now wholly surrendered to the pursuit of well-being, slept luxuriously upon his red cushion. Soon George had another visitor. The Vicar's aunt, accompanied by a policeman with a notebook, came to see George, and the policeman rapped out a lot of questions. George's answers could not be called really satisfactory.

Yes, the Vicar had been to see him that evening. What time had he left? Soon after seven. He hadn't stayed long. Which way did he go? Back to the Vicarage. No one had seen him return that way, though people had been at their doors till after nine? Well, he'd gone the other way then. But no one had seen him go that way? Well, perhaps he'd gone out at the back. George had forgotten. He hadn't a good memory.

The aunt took no part in this discussion. She was staring at a large, black cat that was sitting on a red cushion on a chair by the fire. Every movement of it, every aspect of it, seemed familiar. When it turned its face toward her, it seemed strange that it was not wearing eyeglasses with a black cord. . . . She must pull herself together. It would be terrible if she let this unfortunate affair get so on her mind that she saw likenesses to her poor nephew in every animal she met.

The cat began to mew as soon as the door closed, and almost automatically George went to open another tin of sardines for it.

During the next three days events moved fast, and

at the end of the three days William came across to George's cottage despondently.

"It's all up wi' me, Garge," he said. "They've traced the note to me, an' that spyin' old cat of a Miss Tibbie next door, she's told 'em she saw me buryin' somethin' in the garden that night, an' they've got what they call a warry out to search the place, an' they'll dig it up an'—"

"Well, it's as bad for me," said George unsympathetically. "Yours is only stealin', an' they're tryin' to make me out a murderer. They're diggin' about my place now, messin' up all my taters an'—"

Just then both of them heard a tapping at the window and turned sharply. The little green man was standing outside the window, stamping impatiently and making imperious gestures to them to open it. George hastened across the room, opened the window, and the little green man flew on to the table, where he stood frowning at them sternly.

"Well, you *have* made a mess of it," he said with intense scorn in his tiny voice.

William swallowed, then said indignantly, "Well, why did you give me *stole* money?"

"*Stole* money?" said the little man. "It was *your* sort of money, wasn't it? What more did you want? And it isn't as if *any* of you ever kept it. It just goes from one to another, round and round. From the man on the road to you, and from you to some one else. What does it matter where it comes from, if it's only got to go on to some one else? I don't understand. You have such stupid ideas. It was so convenient, finding the bag there with just the amount you asked

for. And as for *you,"* to George, "wasting your wish turning people into *cats!"*

"It were a mistake," said George humbly.

The Vicar was sitting up on his cushion, watching the little green man with interest. He put out a paw playfully, as if to investigate, then decided it was too much trouble, curled up again, and went to sleep.

"Well, I've managed to get *one* more wish for you," went on the little man peevishly. "It's been a lot of trouble. The queen didn't like having to give another. I couldn't possibly get more than one, you'll just have to do the best you can."

And he spread his iridescent wings and flew out the window up into the summer sky.

"Let me have it, William," pleaded George. "I need it worst. Mine's murder, an' yours is only stealin'."

"Well, I like that," said William indignantly. "They can't prove nothin' ag'in you, while they can ag'in me. They can find—" He stopped and stood staring out the window.

Two policemen were coming slowly up the little walk to the cottage door.

"Quick!" said William. "They're coming for us—let's toss who'll have it."

"No!" said George with a sudden shout. "I know! I *know!* I wish . . . I wish it were back at evenin' with you and me on Pixie Hill."

George sat up with a start and looked about him. His start roused William, who also sat up, rubbing his eyes. They looked at each other and smiled sheepishly.

"Well, us dropped off, after all," said William, stretching. "Us'd best be gettin' on."

George rose silently, and the two old men began to walk down the hill together. George threw a furtive glance at his friend and said,

"William—"

"Aye," said William.

But suddenly George knew that he would never mention their recent adventures to William and that William would never mention them to him.

" 'Tis a grand evening," said George. " 'Tis goin' to be a grand day tomorrow."

And William said: "Aye, Garge. 'Tis, surely."

Then they walked down to the village in silence.

At the gate of George's cottage they met the Vicar. The Vicar went with George into the little cottage, and William, with a rather curious glance at the Vicar and at George went on home.

"You weren't at church last Sunday, George, were you?" said the Vicar, as soon as they entered the little cottage. "Weren't at church—weren't at church."

Then he decided not to say anything more about it. George was staring at him with a set, tense look on his face that the cleric mistook for an expression of overwhelming penitence.

He couldn't know, of course, that George was fighting back an almost uncontrollable impulse to offer him a saucer of cream and a sardine. . . .

QUESTIONS

What is the setting of this story? the time of year? What tradition exists regarding this time? Have you read *A Midsummer Night's Dream?* Who wrote it? Have you seen or read the plays, *The Road to Yesterday,* and *Dear Brutus?*

What is the meaning of "pixie"?

Who are "they," in "They can take you easy"?

Did George really wake when he "woke up with a start"?

Who was the tiny man dressed in green? Describe him fully.

How did he reward George and what became of him?

Where did George and William meet the Reverend Theophilus Medlowe?

What is a parochial call? Why was the Vicar making one?

What are *sotto voce* comments?

What was the chief characteristic of the Vicar's speech?

When did George make his wish and how was it fulfilled?

What dreadful statement did William shortly afterward make about fairy wishes?

Why did William leave George?

Relate the events that followed in which George and the cat were concerned.

How did George announce dinner?

Define the term, "metamorphosed cleric."

Why did George suddenly decide to see William?

How did he announce his departure, that is, to the cat?

Tell about his meeting William.

What was William's opinion about turning clergymen into cats?

How did William further terrify George?

How did George "show respect for the cloth"?

Why did he suspect that the Vicar enjoyed his new state?

When did William come to see George?

Tell about the news in the evening paper.

Why, do you think, did George feel a "certain secret unregenerate relish"?

What reports spread about George and the Vicar?

Who came perilously near recognizing the black cat?

Tell about the return of the little green man.

How does he rebuke the two men and what does he offer them?

How did they make use of his offer?

Relate the closing episode.

Write a fairy story, or a story made around three wishes.

STORIES OF THE SUPERNATURAL

William Austin, "Peter Rugg," "The Missing Man" (reprinted in *Great Stories of All Nations,* Lieber and Williams, Brentano).

Stephen Benét, "The King of the Cats" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1929, Doubleday).

Robert W. Chambers, "The Mask" (*The King in Yellow,* Harper & Bros.).

A. E. Coppard, "Clorinda Walks in Heaven" (reprinted in *31 Stories,* Rhys and Dawson Scott, D. Appleton & Co.).

Richard Harding Davis, "A Charmed Life" (*Once Upon a Time,* Chas. Scribner's Sons).

Kenneth Grahame, "The Reluctant Dragon" (*Dream Days,* Dodd, Mead & Co.).

W. H. Hudson, "Tecla and the Little Men" (*Tales of the Pampas,* Alfred A. Knopf). (This particular tale is in verse.)

W. W. Jacobs, "The Monkey's Paw" (*The Lady of the Barge,* Dodd, Mead & Co. Reprinted in numerous collections; for example, *Notable Short Stories of Today,* Knickerbocker, Harper & Bros.).

Henry James, "Maud Evelyn" (*The Soft Side,* Methuen, London. See also *Collected Works,* Chas. Scribner's Sons).

Paul Morand, "The Horse of Genghis Khan" (reprinted in *Great Stories of All Nations,* Lieber and Williams, Brentano).

Christopher Morley, Translation of Alfred de Musset's "The Story of a White Blackbird" (*Two Fables,* Doubleday).

H. G. Wells, "The Door in the Wall" (*The Short Stories of H. G. Wells,* Doubleday).

LADY NEW LUCK

BY

CLINTON DANGERFIELD

Clinton Dangerfield

A Southerner, Clinton Dangerfield inherited from her mother, who was a distinguished horsewoman, a love for riding in the saddle. At an early age she became the companion of her brother, an outdoor man, who believed her able to share his adventures. She has had, she says, some narrow escapes in her horseback experiences. Once an outlaw Western pony broke into the forest, throwing her with such force as to knock her unconscious and to give her a few small scars. On another occasion, she stopped at a dangerous bridge when an engineer on a coal train below warned her off. She began to ride down the bank but found herself caught in a shale slide. Both she and her mount shot to the bottom of the ravine on the heap of shale and arrived unharmed.

Miss Dangerfield has been writing since she was nine years old, and has published verse, short stories, and a few short novels. "Lady New Luck" proves to you that she has the ability of making her readers share her adventures.

LADY NEW LUCK[1]

THE great racing mare, Lady New Luck, traveled like the equine princess she was. She had her private box car and her personal attendant. And every throb of the rushing engine sped her nearer to new triumphs in Tennessee.

But she hated railroads. Hated the noise, the lurching of the train around curves. Hated the smell of whisky on her personal attendant who lay drunk at her feet, sprawling on the straw litter, half under her stomach. Now and then she moved restlessly, but she was daintily careful not to step on him. She had never stepped on anything alive. Never would, if she could help it.

Very beautiful she was. Not with the rounded, fat curves of a Norman. Hers was a slim, aristocratic perfection. She just missed being thin, for her form was pure speed made alive. Her coat shone brown satin. Her great brown eyes were softly kind, though they had fire in their depths. Her forehead lay wide and tranquil between and above the eyes, and her profile showed no dish-faced meanness.

From outside she heard the roar of the great Tennessee River. The train ran furiously along the edge of its rocky banks toward Chattanooga. Train and river clamored against each other. On the right hand huge Lookout echoed back their roar.

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[1] *Liberty,* June 9, 1928. Reprinted by permission of the author.

The mare shivered uneasily, but the drunken groom slept on. He was too young in his treachery of trust to have been found out yet, but for months thirst had crawled in his veins, broken his peace. Now he slept stertorously. She didn't like his snoring.

Presently her little pointed ears pricked. Beyond the sharp curve they were approaching her keen hearing caught the roar of another engine, though the engineer of her own train heard nothing.

Then came the crash. From both of the colliding trains cars toppled into the river. It was spring. The Tennessee was in flood. Its current snatched greedily at broken cars and drowning men.

Lady New Luck's car went over the steepest part of the edge. It crashed on a rock. The whole side of the box car smashed open. Had the mare been properly haltered she would have drowned, but the groom's drunken fingers had not even knotted the rope. It slipped through the ring as though greased, as the car rolled over again, fell into the boiling river, and sank, anchored by its heavy wheels.

The groom drowned there. But in the wild flood, under a cloudy night sky, the racing mare rose to the surface. Bruised she was, and one hip marked with cuts, but not badly hurt. She swam steadily, heading obliquely for shore. When she gained it, and rose dripping from the flood, she was well beyond the groaning confusion of the wreck.

Behind her she heard shrieks and the incessant screaming of one engine's whistle. Terrified, nervous as a stag, she fled into the night.

When morning came she was on top of Lookout

Mountain and heading south. This enormous tableland runs into three States: Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Far past Lula Lake, beyond even McKaig's Settlement, the mountain widened into huge stretches of free range country where valley cattle came up in thousands each year to graze on the free grass. This was the year 1921, and in the white oak and pine forests only occasional log cabins broke the primeval woods.

The mare moved steadily south and reached these solitary stretches, owned chiefly by coal companies. She frequently was seen by the mountaineers. They merely thought her one of the common range horses, "too light in bone to be much good."

They took no newspaper, cared for no news beyond their own dramatic personal affairs, and never dreamed how Colonel Carrisford of Thomasville had burned the wires with frantic telegrams about his missing mare. They would have found it hard to believe that a great reward had been offered for her and that, when her death had been accepted as a fact, the iron-jawed Colonel had actually wept in secret.

Meanwhile Lady New Luck prospered. Her halter caught on a snaggy dead limb and was torn off. She was glad to be quit of it and its rope.

She fed along lovely solitary creeks set with tall ferns and long glossy lines of rhododendrons. Range cattle looked placidly up from their grazing as she passed through them. Raccoons watched her with beady, glittering eyes; gray squirrels played around her; and hermit thrushes made the solitude exquisite with song. She was delicately content.

Then fall came. The grass grew tough. Good grazing vanished; the valley cattle were driven home. Starvation nipped at her heels. In desperation she turned down a trail and at last descended into one of those little buried valleys, cedar set, that hide in the shadows of Lookout, flanking the main valley.

It was night when she reached it. It was morning when she came to the paintless gate of an old log cabin and whinnied anxiously; for food she must have, and that very soon.

A boy—he was ten, but small for his age—ran out. His wide face was thick with freckles. He clutched a piece of corn pone in one small fist. He hurried to the gate, putting a red head over it. The mare nickered pleadingly, her eyes feverish with hunger. Instantly he gave her the bread, and grinned with pleasure over the eagerness with which she took it. But that taste of food only made her hunger more avid. She whinnied beseechingly.

The boy glanced back at the cabin and scowled. Then he muttered to the mare:

"You're gonna get somep'n to eat anyhow. Yes, you are."

He slipped out of the gate. But a figure, crooked and hard in outline, darkened the open cabin door. A voice harsh as a corn crake's called suspiciously:

"What you doin' with that big-bellied skeleton out there? Rock it off!"

The boy came inside the gate and blinked two steady eyes, brown as the mare's, at his grandfather, shrewdly considering what bait he could throw to his relative.

"It's a stray mare."

"Then let 'er keep a-strayin'. Rock her!"

"I'm a-goin' to take her up. She'll be advertised in nex' week's paper. We'll git th' money. That's better'n chunkin' her away."

"Reward?" The bitter miser face lighted in reaction to his life's only passion. Then it hardened. "Wouldn't nobody pay a dime for that bag o' bones! Rock her off or I'll tan your hide."

The boy looked at the old man and felt in imagination the bite of his whip. He looked at the mare—and the soft, piteous beauty of her eager eyes shook him. He revolved the situation with a boy's shrewdness.

"I'm goin' to take her up. Ef nobody advertises for her, we'll git her free fer nothin' to haul wood with th' sled. We wouldn't have to hire ole Jed's yaller mule any more."

The miser hesitated. Instantly the boy headed for the ancient barn, leading the mare by her forelock. Old Harney yelled after him:

"Don't give her more'n a bundle o' fodder. No corn!"

The boy nodded. But in the barn he fed her two quarts of corn besides the fodder.

That afternoon the great racing mare hauled her first sledload of wood. Harness had never before touched her delicately formed body. She disliked it. But she delighted in the boy, in his swift but gentle movements, his fearless piping voice, his perfect confidence in her. So she suffered the sled, drawing it swiftly along as the boy led her by a short rein. Only now and then did

she glance back nervously at the queer thing dragging behind her.

Her work slightly mollified old Harney, temporarily only, as he sat hunched over his big, ill laid hearth, warming his crooked claws incessantly at the fire fed by the waste wood the boy "knocked up" before hauling. Old Harney had a predatory profile and cruel eyes of hawk yellow under his sparse white hair. His long white beard was tobacco stained. His rusty jeans and rustier boots were patched and repatched. Yet under the hearth over which he crouched lay buried nearly $3,000 in gold—a fortune as large in the tiny hidden valley as Rockefeller's in his bigger world.

The boy knew the money was there and knew his only relative, this grandfather, was very old. But it never occurred to the boy that the gold would some day be his. It seemed to him that grandpappy had always owned him and always would. And he was a diligent, conscientious little slave, able beyond his years, and accepting his barren life without complaint. There was none to tell him he craved love.

Much wood was hauled, but old Harney grumbled continuously about the mare's presence while waiting the coming of the county paper. This was all the mail they ever received. It was always left on Fridays at the R. F. D. mail box just outside the miniature valley's east wall of foothills.

That Friday Danny Harney rode the racing mare to the box. Very delicately and quietly she went, too starved to feel like running, and soothed by the firm little figure on her bare back. He had a naturally light hand on the reins and he let her choose her own gait.

When old man Harney put on his glasses and read the paper aloud to himself the boy listened and trembled. Was the mare advertised or not? Passionately the boy hoped she wasn't; but it took the whole morning to find out, for old Harney always started at the first column and read straight through, and nothing could make his perverse mind vary this routine.

Painfully alert, Danny heard one rural item after another. At last the Lost and Found column. There wasn't a horse in it.

Old Harney looked malevolently over the paper's edge.

"I done told ye nobody'd waste an ad on that bag o' bones. Haul in more wood this afternoon and then take her to the crossroads an' rock her off. Or, if you're a mind to, give her to ole nigger Sam. He's movin' to Alabam' tomorry." Then, with suspicion and angry emphasis, "You hear me?"

The boy wiped a sweating hand across his freckled face.

"Yessir, grandpappy, I hear ye."

Yet that night the mare ate again in her accustomed stall. When morning came and Danny was milking the kicking, wall-eyed cow into a rusty pail, Lady New Luck was eating a good breakfast.

She was in the middle of it when old Harney suddenly hobbled into the barn.

A moment he stared at the corn in her manger. It was rapidly being gathered up in lipfuls by Lady New Luck. Gray with fury, old Harney swore until foam stood on his withered lips. Then he made for the great mare's stable door.

A stunted, resolute figure got there before him. A blazing pair of brown eyes shot fire at him.

"Git away from her door! Ef ye touch her I'll jam this here pitchfork through yer middle!"

Before the armed and desperate defender, old Harney, amazed, hesitated, stood still. He threatened angrily:

"You'd go to hell if you was to hurt your grandpappy."

"I'd go thar to save her. She's all I got. 'N' I'm all she's got. Leave us alone! Before ma died she told me this was her land, bought with her money. You done took it, like you done took the money she left. Half o' what's under the hearth was her'n. You done took everything. But I found the mare my own self. I'm a-goin' to keep her."

Before the white courage of the square, freckled face, before the advanced tines of the glittering pitchfork clutched in sturdy, freckled hands, old Harney retreated, snarling.

From then on arose a duel of wills in the white oak cabin.

The mare was not fed less but more, and daily the boy saw a greater beauty in her. He found an old currycomb and cleaned her. He crawled over and under her. He spent nearly all his spare time with her.

But as his love for her increased, the old man's hate of her waxed as well. At last the restless hostility in his eyes warned the shrewd boy that, in some covert way, the mare was in danger.

In his anxiety, Danny began to sleep lightly; to have horrid dreams that woke him, a-sweat with fear. At

last, one bitter February night when a bad dream tormented him, he woke shivering in the cold moonlight to see his grandfather's bed empty.

Danny sprang from under his quilts. He was already in shirt and trousers, never having owned night clothes. He searched the cabin, but old Harney was gone. So was the ax which was nightly brought in and left by the fireplace, that no dampness might rust its cruel edge.

Color faded from the boy's face. But his eyes burned. He hurried into his shoes, dragged a chair to the mantelpiece, sprang up, snatched down his grandfather's loaded rifle from its deerhorn supports, and, coatless and hatless, dashed from the house.

He reached the barn. As he had expected, old Harney wasn't there—nor the mare either. Although the sky was clear and luminous with a midheaven full moon, a light snow had fallen hours earlier. On its virgin page was written that the mare and old Harney were gone forth together; that he was leading her.

The boy took up the trail. The old rifle impeded him, but he clung to it—it might be needed to save her. As he ran he muttered:

"I'm a-comin', Luly. I'm a-comin'. He shan't hurt ye! He—"

Along the base of the mountain ran a rough path. Dead limbs crossed it. Boulders fallen from the escarpment above impeded it, but it rambled on past many little hollows eroded in the mountain side.

The boy went in a stumbling run along the path, gulping for breath, craning his head as far forward as he could without losing his balance. His burning brown

eyes picked up the mare's tracks steadily in the sharp moonlight.

He rounded an outthrust foothill and saw on his right the largest of the hollows. Lime rock ledged and darkly cedar set, it yawned at him like a huge open grave. And into it ran the tracks of the mare.

Danny reeled in past the first dwarfish cedars. The sight he saw nearly stopped his hammering heart.

The mare was standing by a dead white oak which had fallen across the hollow. She was haltered to a scrub cedar. Along the dead white oak inched old Harney's crooked form. Plainly he intended to reach the log's butt, near her head. This would give him added height for a down driving blow. In his hand he clutched the ax handle. The blade glittered brightly. Its executioner edge cut the light in ugly flashes.

Danny leaped forward. In his hands the rifle rose and pointed firmly as he screamed with the last of his nearly spent breath:

"Tetch her 'n' I'll shoot!"

The mare started, then whinnied happily. Old Harney fell off the log. He rose instantly, peering furiously over its ramparts, his ax still in hand.

"You—you brat! You dast speak to *me* that away!"

"I dast kill ye if ye try to murder her!" the boy sobbed out wildly.

" 'Murder her'—you freckled little guinea aig! It's nothin' but a mare!"

"It's murder! She breathes—jest like us. Her heart beats. She talks to me—she's mine—all I got. Git over that there log 'n' start home."

The miser's green-gray gaze blinked at the rifle muz-

zle, ran along the barrel to the hammer. It was at full cock. Slowly he crawled over the log and slowly he hobbled homeward, ax in hand, without a backward glance.

The boy uncocked his rifle and ran to the mare. He let the rifle fall at her feet. He flung his arms around her neck, sobbing convulsively, and gasping out his words:

"Oh, Luly, if I'd a-been a minute later—a minute later—"

Buried in the cedars farther up, a little screech owl shivered out a thin-edged wail, but the mare only whinnied softly and blew warm breath against the boy's ear. She comforted him finally, and he was able to pull himself together.

Danny rode her home, carrying the rifle. He fed her well, then came into the house, shuddering with cold as he entered. A glance showed him his grandfather in bed, watching him with rat-keen eyes. Neither spoke. The boy put up the rifle, made himself some coffee from yesterday's grounds still in the pot, drank it, and ate some corn pone. Then he took up his vigil by the fireplace.

Still neither spoke. An hour passed. The boy sat wide awake, but the old man, wearied out by his walk, slept now, and snored like some strange beast.

In its corner the grandfather clock ticked loudly. Danny listened to it. *"Here—there! Here—there!"* it said emphatically. Here? He knew about that. But what of There?

He remembered what he had heard once at the railroad's battered station. It was the greasy cattle drover

who spoke from the back of his saddle mule, his tones thick with his cheek-pouched "chaw" of tobacco, but his trick of overemphasizing some words as marked as ever.

"There," he'd said, "down in Thomas County, Georgy, *there's* a man (by the name of Carrisford, Colonel Tom Carrisford) that plum *loves* hawses. Yessuh, I was down there oncet. It sure is a *hawse* country, grass green the winter through. This here Carrisford lives near Thomasville. They say he thinks *more* of hawses than humans. Gimme a *mule;* hardier, just as good ridin'. But down *there* it's sure hawse heaven. Free range, green th' year round. . . ."

To every word of this the boy's tenacious, unburdened memory had clung. He never forgot a conversation if it had any meat at all. Now the drover's idle words came back. Came like a flame blowing through him. He arose and began to gather his scant belongings. If a mere mule could "make it" down to horse heaven, so could Luly.

When old man Harney creaked out of bed at daylight, boy and mare were gone. Old Harney rubbed an iron jaw and twisted an implacable mouth as he addressed the kicking cow:

"I'll hev to milk you, you cloven-hoofed she-devil—yit I'm plum glad that brat's run away. He—knowed too much about—it."

By "it" he meant his hoard under the hearth.

Two tramps, a boy and a mare, crossed over the wall formed by the junction of Lookout and Pigeon. They dipped into McLemore's Cove, reached Bower's Gap, went up the ruined road there, crossed Lookout,

dipped into Trenton valley—and went steadily south, acquiring directions from day to day.

The mare sported a patched blind bridle. Her saddle was an old sun-flower design quilt in faded scarlet and white, folded small and strapped on her by a piece of wagon line. There were no stirrups.

Danny had his "saddlebags" on behind him: two "crocus" or gunny sacks tied together. In one went such grain for the mare as he could beg or "work out." In the other were his scant personal belongings and the mare's one toilet article, the rusty currycomb.

Whenever he stopped to ask a night's shelter, the boy had a ready story to allay any curiosity. As, for instance, to a soft-bosomed wife who thought him far too small to be riding alone, and who demanded his destination:

"I ain't sure-enough small, ma'am. I jest kinda look that way. Jest wait till you see me chop you some kindlin's." This as he slid off the mare.

"You ain't told me where you' goin', sonny."

"Thomasville, in Thomas County. I got a friend down there. He's a-goin' to let my mare eat on his pastures while I chop cordwood fer him."

Thus you may say there was always a third with Danny—the unseen friend, Colonel Carrisford, whom he imagined and believed in, although he had no tangible evidence of him. But the drover's assertion that there was really a man who loved horses as Danny loved the great mare, was supported by Danny's firm faith that there must be such a horse lover because Danny himself was one.

Farther and farther south went boy and mare. They

passed Atlanta. The mare was footsore now, being unshod. So Danny stopped at a crossroads smithy and engaged the leather-aproned, grizzled smith in conversation:

"My mare she needs shoein', mister, but I ain't no money. Will you furnish shoes an' put 'em on, in trade fer me haulin' you some wood?"

"Whose boy air you?" demanded the surprised smith in a voice that roared like his own forge, and scowling with perplexity at Danny.

"I b'long down in Thomasville where ther grass grows green all winter. I'm a-headin' there. Say, mister, I'd stay here two days an' haul extry ef you'd lemme feed my mare."

"What erbout your own belly?" growled the smith ferociously. "You peaked-face, hollow-eyed son of a gun!"

"I seed plenty turnips in yore garden. I could eat 'em raw. They ain't worth much, an' your wife wouldn't have to cook 'em. But th' mare kain't live on turnips. She needs corn. She needs it orful bad." His voice shook. "She—she ain't had nuthin' today but dead grass 'n' weeds."

"You get the hell into the barn," snarled the smith, his black eyes suddenly, oddly liquid. "Feed that big-bellied skeleton. I'll shoe her later on. Then get ye into th' house 'n' tell Mrs. Harp I said to let ye wash fer dinner."

Two days were spent at the smith's—two days of glorious recuperation without any wood to haul. But intimate questions hounded Danny much too closely, and on the morning of the third day he appeared before

dawn at the smith's bedside, waking the friendly couple. He announced steadily:

"I thank you both an orful lot. Good-by."

The smith sat up and filled the air with profanity.

"Back to bed with ye! Ye little freckled galoot."

Danny smiled at him, an exquisite, understanding smile, full of childhood's mystic comprehension of tenderness, however roughly expressed. Then he disappeared.

Before the couple rose, Danny and the mare were well on their way south—always south.

The weather was capricious. Frosty winds often nipped at them and knifed the boy through his ragged coat. An overcoat he had never owned, but both he and the mare were hardy from exposure.

Farther—farther south. Stray live oaks appeared, and at last, like a flag of promise, a segment of solitary gray moss swung from a tree limb. But that day the mare seemed actually lazy. She must be sick, thought Danny.

When night came they had missed all the farmhouses. A promising gateway led only to a deserted dwelling and an equally deserted barn. But the barn was stacked with fodder, rich, well cured fodder, stripped in bundles from live corn plants. There was corn, but the corncrib was locked.

Danny stabled the mare and fed her fodder liberally.

"I'll pay 'em back first money I earn down in Thomas County," he told her reassuringly. "These folks is milyumnaires, er they couldn't have all this here horse feed, so they won't mind waitin'."

Then he sturdily invaded a window of the locked

house. It was decidedly spooky inside. Queer Noises lived there, awful Queer Noises. They cracked and pattered at him from wall and floor as soon as he got in.

The folks musta been gone a year, thought Danny, for those Queer Noises to get so biggety.

In reality, the house had been occupied recently. A grown person would have seen at once that the family was merely off on a visit.

But Danny hurriedly got a fire going on the kitchen hearth to scare off those Queer Noises.

It was a typical Southern small-farm kitchen of earlier years. A big, hospitable fireplace, where many a "sweet tater" had been baked, flanked by the wood-burning stove which marked modernity.

Two big cupboards with perforated tin paneled doors held respectively china and food—when food was there. Now only a plate of forgotten and slightly moldy hand-shaped biscuits offered refreshment, but the boy seized on them as heavenly manna. He made coffee expertly and had a feast.

That night he slept on a pallet which he had compounded of quilts. He covered himself with other quilts, and pressed his bullet head and red hair into a soft goosedown pillow.

He woke late and found the sun laughing in at the window as though it had a joke on him. He sprang up, slipped on his coat and shoes, all he had discarded, and hurried to feed the mare before "getting a wash" and doing his cooking.

A rangy legged little creature, black as midnight, was lurching around the stall in a coolly exploratory fash-

ion, while the great mare turned on it eyes of deep maternal love.

"By golly!" muttered Danny, overcome. Then he shook his head reproachfully.

"Luly, it was powerful good of ye to give me a present, but whyn't you wait, Luly, till we got to Thomas County? Don't ye *know* that critter kain't walk much fer ten days? It ain't no steadier than that kickin' cow's calf was—an' it took ten days fer that calf to git gallopin'."

Thus was the great mare reproached for presenting the colt so hoped for by Colonel Carrisford. But the son of Man o' War, staggering around the stall, cared for no reproaches, and presently was drinking again from an udder of bursting sweetness. He was ten hours old and found existence highly intriguing.

Danny fed the mare, returned to the house, washed his hands and face, made coffee, and finished up the biscuits. Then he went back to the barn, led the mare out to water, and watched her drink thirstily. Beside her lurched and even swaggered the black colt.

Danny returned them to the stall.

Back in the house he considered affairs with anxiety and concluded he must camp here for ten days. He found meal enough to live on and potatoes in the cellar. There was a lot of canned fruit, but it was locked in a cellar fruit box and the boy never tampered with locks.

For nine days Danny and his "fambly," as he called them, remained in strict seclusion. After deep consideration, Danny named the colt Pete, and Luly seemed pleased with the name's sound. She was eating

a plumb scandalous lot of fodder. Assuredly they must move on tomorrow.

That night the storm came. It began with a patter of light rain and moaning wind. Danny built the fire higher yet, until from the curtainless kitchen window it shone out in a challenge of warm cheer. It was visible a long way, even through the storm, and it caught and held the eyes of two human wolves lost in the dangerous night. They turned and made for the farmhouse, cursing the cold rain in a sulphurous continuity.

Danny heaped on more wood while the wind snarled and tore around the house corners, snatching at the tin gutters. Through it rolled the thunder. Now, thunder belongs in the skies, but suddenly it swooped and battered on the kitchen's porch door. And while Danny gaped in terror it took voice:

"In! In! Let us in!"

Only humans! In trembling relief the boy dashed to the door and unbarred it. Two men fled in. Danny slammed the door, barred it, and turned to welcome the pair crouched by the fire. But his words died in his throat, for just such fellows he'd never seen before. With instinctive wisdom he feared their pointed, hard faces, their coolly vicious glances as they shed their raincoats and stared around. The elder snapped:

"Folks all asleep?"

"I'm all the folks."

"Where's the rest?"

"Away."

"Comin' back tonight?"

"I don't reckon so."

The men slept there. He liked them even less than

the Queer Noises, although they went out to the barn with him next morning and quite civilly looked at the mare while he fed her.

After coffee and flapjacks the older man stopped picking his broken teeth to snarl:

"Looky here, you boy. We're gonna take your mare—'n' ride her double, cross country, to where we can swing a train. Don't start no squallin' about it, onless you want a knock on the head."

Danny made no answer. A sick feeling rose in his stomach. He looked at the hard faces, the rat-quick eyes, the implacable mouths. He sat on in silence, his thoughts racing as fast as the mare's feet had ever done.

Then he said grumpily, looking indifferently at the one he had inwardly named Bigger Rat Face:

"She's nothin' but trouble. I'm plumb tired of her." He added childishly, "I found me somethin' here better'n any little ole hawse. I could buy me a stable of hawses." He yawned. "My foot's sore where she tromped on me the other day. Reckon I'll git a foot wash."

He kicked off his shoes, while over his head Bigger Rat Face and his mate, named in Danny's mind Littler Rat Face, exchanged swift glances of keenly wakened interest.

Bigger Rat Face looked searchingly at Danny's freckled face.

"If you found something nice here, kiddo, maybe you could go with us. I might show you an elegant time. Come clean! What you found?"

Danny stared hard at the fire. He drawled:

"You know—how some folks—buries gold—money under the hearth?"

"Yes—yes!" Both men's ears were stretching now. "Yes, sonny—they say th' hicks are always doing that! An' you dug under this hearth?"

"This hearth?" He grinned owlishly. "Why, it's mortared down!"

"Then where—what—"

"Naw! Ye'll go a-takin' *that,* same's you did the mare."

Bigger Rat Face sprang at him, seized and twisted his arm. Danny screamed with a pain not in the least pretended.

"Quit! Quit! I'll show ye!"

Released, he whimpered:

"I was gittin' taters out the cellar. I noticed a place had done been dug up and packed down again—'n' I dug in—an' found—it. An' kivered it up again till I was ready fur it—an'—"

"Come down. Show us!"

He nodded sullenly, then hesitated.

"Kin I have half?"

Bigger Rat Face kicked him. Littler Rat Face unbarred the cellar door.

Sniffling with pain, Danny lighted the lantern and gave it to Bigger Rat Face.

"There's a shovel down there," he whimpered. "Come on! I wisht I'd never spoke. I hate ye!"

"You'll hate us worse if you don't show us that money hole," snarled Littler Rat Face, driving the shoeless boy before him into the cellar.

Midcenter of the clay floor were a wheelbarrow, a

couple of empty fruit crates. To the left the locked fruit box. At the further end of the floor a newly packed square of earth. To this Danny hurried them. Bigger Rat Face set down the lantern and caught up the shovel. Littler Rat Face discovered a broken-handled spade. Both began a furious, greedy digging, attacking at opposite ends the freshly packed earth which showed a yard-square space, very promising and cache-like. It covered only a new drainpipe—but Rat Faces couldn't guess that.

The lantern lighted the "cache" surface—and but little more. Like most farm lanterns, it smoked and its glass chimney was none too clean. There was light from the cellar's open trapdoor, but this light only struck down the stairs in a stair-wide stretch. Between the edge of the lantern's limited radius and the stair light, there was deep gloom.

Danny shifted backward—backward—on noiseless feet. He didn't turn until he reached the rickety stair. Then he whirled like a gray squirrel and darted up.

The first warning the greedy diggers got was the slam of the trapdoor, the shooting of its outer and heavy iron bolt. In five minutes Danny, the mare, and the colt were off again. He let the mare lope, and the surprised colt fell instantly into a valiant if leggy gallop.

Until noon they traveled south, pausing only when the colt needed a short rest.

Finally a dingy little crossroads store loomed in front of them. Danny halted. A much gnawed hickory tree sported a horseshoe nailed on it, calks up. Over one of these Danny threw his bridle reins, then hur-

ried into the store, eyeing its fly-specked stock with deep respect. A spidery old dame, with suspicion in her little gray eyes, popped up behind the one counter and peered at him over her glasses, demanding in a thready voice:

"What chu want, boy?" Her enunciation of "boy" made the noun a crime in itself.

"You got a telefoam?"

"Kain't you see it?"

"Yessum. I seen one oncet at the station. Please, ma'am, I wanter telefoam the sheriff. What does it cost?"

"A nickel. But I never heard of no boy small as you phonin' a sheriff! Where's yore money?"

"I ain't no nickel. I got a quilt I'll trade ye."

She hesitated then snapped:

"Fetch it in!" Quilts were her hobby.

The quilt, so recently a saddle, was brought in. She peered over it as Danny spread it out.

"Needs washin'! Needs it *bad!* An' one end is tore. But I'll trade. Go call him up."

"Y—you git him fer me," gasped Danny, embarrassed by his ignorance of how to manage the magical "telefoam." "Soon as you git him I'll talk to him."

She reluctantly complied.

"There's a child here wants speech with ye."

"I ain't no child," muttered Danny very indignant.

She snapped at him:

"Git up on that soap box, you freckled flea, 'n' talk."

Danny mounted and, with a shiver of excitement over the act, poured his piping tones into the queer

hole, setting the receiver valiantly to his unaccustomed ear. Instantly the sheriff roared back:

"What's that? You got two bad men locked up in a cellar? Whose cellar? . . . You don't know? Well, what was you doin' in th' house? . . . Oh, you borrowed it! Well, sonny, describe them bad 'uns."

Now, *that* is something a forest child can do—describe you to a frazzle. An accurate verbal picture of the treasure diggers came steadily over the wire in Danny's own queer phrases. It ceased. The sheriff roared:

"Son—locate the house for me—an' I'm on my way. Them birds is killers. They're wanted in two States. Big rewards out."

The piping voice of Danny again turned to descriptive matter: There were two sycamores at the front gate. The well had an orful heavy old chain on the bucket. The house was corn-shuck color and had vines on it. There was two chimbleys, one at each end. The front porch railin' was busted. The path from the steps to the gate was all pebbles. There was white shells stuck each side. The gyarden had a little ole scarecrow in it. It wore a black hat 'n' a white shirt, all tore, 'n' had black pants. The martin house stood over it. It swung five gourds—

"Quit. 'Nough," roared the sheriff. "Old man Jack Johnson's house. I'll drop you a line, buddy. What's your address, fer I'll split that reward with you."

"Oh, mister, give my share to Mister Johnson, will ye please, suh? Me an' my mare has done eat on him a lot. Give him ther money. Good-by, suh."

"Wait, darn ye!" roared the sheriff. But Danny had hung up and had left the soap box.

The old dame eyed him witheringly.

"Ef that sheriff knowed boys well as *I* do he'd never let yore lyin' send him on no sech wild-goose chase as *that!* A little tad like you shuttin' men in a cellar. *I* know boys' lies. I know 'em when I hear 'em. 'N' I don't want yore quilt. I reckon you stole it at Jack Johnson's. Take it, an' git outer here."

Danny gave her a look. Somehow its hurt dignity stayed in her memory afterward and troubled her. He took up the quilt and disappeared.

Three days later there came into the great Carrisford estate, just outside of Thomasville, a very thin though healthy mare, an insolent, swaggering black colt, and a freckle-faced, hollow-eyed boy.

Passing through the open rose-vined gateway, Danny saw before him an emerald sea of green lawn. He rode out on it, and behind a wealth of blooming shrubbery he slipped off, unbuckled the reins from the bit rings, and left the mare to graze. Then he marched sturdily on the great house.

Before him loomed its tall white pillars, its wide-floored piazza, its whole great expanse. But Danny had been far more afraid of the Queer Noises and the "telefoam" than he would ever be of a mere house.

The front door was open. He marched on into the big hall with its ice-smooth floor that nearly tripped him. He saw no one. Then he heard a voice coming from a big room at the left—a clear, cold voice:

"No, there's no hope of it. I'm confident her bones are in the river, and— What the devil's this?"

Danny had marched on into the library.

He hastened to establish his right of entrance by firmly demanding:

"Will you axe Colonel Carrisford to come here? I got business with him."

The tall man turned back to the 'phone. He hung up and wheeled on Danny, asking cynically:

"How d' you know he lives here?"

"Folks said so."

The tall man folded his arms, a distinguished figure in his immaculate white suit. To Danny he loomed like an ice mountain, unhelpful, unkind. The cold voice announced:

"If you'll describe this Colonel Carrisford to me I'll try and find him for you. Ever see him?" The man was scowling faintly, but there was a quiver of amusement on his thin, cynical mouth.

"I ain't never seen him, but I reckon I'd know him," Danny answered quietly. "Colonel Carrisford he loves hawses like I do. All his hawses has a bellyful twicet a day. I reckon he looks like a pictur' of Santy Claus I seen at the station."

The tall man laughed outright, then said:

"You've got a disillusionment coming. I'm Colonel Carrisford. What's your business?"

The boy turned pale under his freckles. He was weak with hunger and with a sudden fear of this cold, white-clad figure. Then he thought of Luly. Her life hung on his courage. He swallowed the ball of fear in his throat and made his offer: He would chop cordwood forever for Luly's board and his own.

"Oh, you would? And who, if you please, is Luly?"

Danny explained.

"Oh, a mare, eh? And where is she? Oh—on my lawn! The devil you say! I don't allow horses on my lawn."

The boy turned paler still.

"I'll put her anywhere you say." Then, in a sudden hysteria of terror, he gave way and cried in a voice strangled with sobs: "Oh, mister, fer Gawd's sake don't go back on Luly! There ain't no way but you—evvybody despises her—throws off on her—there ain't no way but you!"

The floor began to turn under him. He sank into a chair, Colonel Carrisford touched a bell and a Negro servant entered.

"Fetch me some biscuit, quick!"

While the Negro ran for them, Carrisford unlocked a cellaret, took out a bottle of wine, and filled a glass. He bent over Danny, commanding sharply:

"Drink, sonny. That's right—now this biscuit." Then presently, in quite a different voice, "Feel steady now?"

"Yessuh." Danny rose. "I kin stand up all right now. Seemed like somep'n came loose in my laigs. They're all right."

"Then listen to me. I'm going out to look at your mare. But, first, whatever she is, I promise you she shall live from now on in my pastures and eat my grain —free. And I'll give you a better job than cutting cordwood."

The light that never lay on sea or land glowed on Danny's freckled face. He gasped:

"Oh—oh, mister—"

"Never mind talking now. Come show me the mare."

Danny showed him the mare. She was cropping the lush grass in sturdy, regular mouthfuls, undisturbed by the light snaffle in her mouth or the rusty blinders at her eyes. The colt had wandered off. Danny was glad of that. He had yet to battle for the colt, and preferred issues one at a time. He glanced anxiously at the Colonel.

That gentleman literally reeled against a tree. His dark eyes were dilated. He muttered:

"Can't be! Yet I'm certainly not lit!"

With gentle swiftness he moved to the mare and slipped off her bridle. He took her head in his hands. She looked at him with sweet, kind eyes. He gasped out:

"By God—it's she!"

With trembling fingers he tore off the quilt. There on the thin withers showed a small star of white hair.

Danny edged up nervously.

"Colonel— I— Colonel—it's a-comin'! An' I was feared to tell you—"

"What's coming?" Colonel Carrisford wheeled as he spoke—and beheld a leggy black colt galloping up. It shied off at sight of the Colonel, loped around to its mother's opposite side, and began to suck.

"D' you mean to tell me," gasped Colonel Carrisford, "that that colt's *hers?*"

"Oh, I'm jest *awful* sorry!" wailed Danny. "I couldn't help her doin' it. She never knowed no better, er she'd waited till I could afford that there colt."

"Afford! *Afford!* Man o' War's get! My God!" The Colonel hurried around the mare and gloated over

the leggy black colt. Then he shouted, and men came running. Danny heard orders given, saw excitement and joy in all faces, comprehended at last that he had brought his stray home to her actual owner; that she was not Luly, but Lady New Luck; that her son was also the son of horseland's king.

He ran away, sobbing in long, heartbroken sobs, as the mare was led off. The Colonel pursued him, picked him up, demanded the cause of his grief.

"She's yours—I'll never be 'lowed to see her again!"

"Your home is here, always. And you can feed her, ride her every day. Now, come have dinner."

A washed and hungry boy ate a marvelous meal. Afterward, in the library again, he told the whole story, from the hour Lady New Luck appeared at his gate.

Colonel Carrisford was silent. Then he said slowly to himself:

"The stable shan't have him. I thought of him as a future jockey—but I need a son like that."

QUESTIONS

How did Lady New Luck escape from the train wreck?

Why did the mountaineers not take her up?

Who was Colonel Carrisford?

Why did old Harney not wish Danny to keep the mare?

What happened when he discovered that Danny was feeding her corn?

Do you think it credible that the boy awoke in the night and, further, that he found his grandfather about to kill "Luly"?

How did Danny prevent the execution?

Write in full the incident (which is summed up in the story) of the boy's escape with the mare.

Where had he determined to go with her?

Describe the blacksmith with whom Danny spent two days.

What were the chief events at the deserted farmhouse? Can you describe the place as well as Danny did?

How was Danny able to deceive the killers "wanted in two states"? What previous knowledge had he of hidden treasure?

Relate the incident of the boy's "telefoam" conversation.

Tell how he found the Colonel.

What did the Colonel mean when he said, "I'll give you a better job than cutting cordwood"? Why did he change his own mind?

STORIES ABOUT HORSES

Donn Byrne, "Rivers of Damascus" (*McCall's Magazine,* October 26, 1926); "Tale of the Gypsy Horse" (*Destiny Bay,* Little, Brown & Co.).

John Taintor Foote, "The Look of Eagles" (*Saturday Evening Post,* July 3, 1915. Also see the volume published under this title. Doubleday).

Esther Forbes, "Break-Neck Hill" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1920, Doubleday).

Ernest Hemingway, "My Old Man" (*The Best Short Stories of 1923,* O'Brien, Dodd, Mead & Co.).

Charles Tenney Jackson, "The Horse of Hurricane Reef" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1922, Doubleday).

Rudyard Kipling, "The Maltese Cat" (*The Day's Work,* Doubleday).

Ernest Rhys, "The Mare Without a Name" (*31 Stories,* Rhys and Dawson Scott, D. Appleton & Co.).

Wilbur Daniel Steele, "White Horse Winter" (*Land's End,* Harper & Bros.); "Blue Murder" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1925, Doubleday. Reprinted, also, in *Notable Short Stories of Today,* Knickerbocker, Harper & Bros., and in *Great Stories of All Nations,* Lieber and Williams, Brentano).

BILL

BY

ZONA GALE

Zona Gale

Zona Gale (Mrs. William Breese) was born at Portage, Wisconsin, August 26, 1874, and completed her academic education at the State University. Until 1904 she wrote for newspapers, meantime laying up many impressions that led to the *Stories of Friendship Village* and other realistic tales. A volume of stories or a full-length novel has come every year or so from Miss Gale's pen since the publication of her first book in 1906. In 1920 she won the Pulitzer Prize for her play, *Miss Lulu Bett;* in 1928, the O. Henry Memorial Prize for her short story, "Bridal Pond." She reveals the all-seeing eye of the reporter in her stories of realism, and a fine spirit of imagination in her tales of romance.

BILL [1]

BILL was thirty when his wife died, and little Minna was four. Bill's carpenter shop was in the yard of his house, so he thought that he could keep up his home for Minna and himself. All day while he worked at his bench, she played in the yard, and when he was obliged to be absent for a few hours, the woman next door looked after her. Bill could cook a little, coffee and bacon and fried potatoes and flapjacks, and he found bananas and sardines and crackers useful. When the woman next door said this was not the diet for four-year-olds, he asked her to teach him to cook oatmeal and vegetables, and though he always burned the dishes in which he cooked these things, he cooked them every day. He swept, all but the corners, and he dusted, dabbing at every object; and he complained that after he had cleaned the windows he could not see out as well as he could before. He washed and patched Minna's little garments and mended her doll. He found a kitten for her so that she wouldn't be lonely. At night he heard her say her prayer, kneeling in the middle of the floor with her hands folded, and speaking like lightning. If he forgot the prayer, he either woke her up, or else he made her say it the first thing next morning. He himself used to try to pray: "Lord, make me do right by her

[1] From *Yellow Gentians and Blue,* by Zona Gale (D. Appleton & Co., 1927). Reprinted by permission of author and publishers.

if you see me doing wrong." On Sundays he took her to church and sat listening with his head on one side, trying to understand, and giving Minna peppermints when she rustled. He stopped work for a day and took her to the Sunday school picnic. "Her mother would of," he explained. When Minna was old enough to go to kindergarten, Bill used to take her morning or afternoon, and he would call for her. Once he dressed himself in his best clothes and went to visit the school. "I think her mother would of," he told the teacher, diffidently. But he could make little of the colored paper and the designs and games, and he did not go again. "There's some things I can't be any help to her with," he thought.

Minna was six when Bill fell ill. On a May afternoon he went to a doctor. When he came home he sat in his shop for a long time and did nothing. The sun was beaming through the window in bright squares. He was not going to get well. It might be that he had six months. . . . He could hear Minna singing to her doll.

When she came to kiss him that night, he made an excuse, for he must never kiss her now. He held her at arm's length, looked in her eyes, said: "Minna's a big girl now. She doesn't want papa to kiss her." But her lip curled and she turned away sorrowful, so the next day Bill went to another doctor to make sure. The other doctor made him sure.

He tried to think what to do. He had a sister in Nebraska, but she was a tired woman. His wife had a brother in the city, but he was a man of many words. And little Minna . . . there were things known to her

which he himself did not know—matters of fairies and the words of songs. He wished that he could hear of somebody who would understand her. And he had only six months. . . .

Then the woman next door told him bluntly that he ought not to have the child there, and him coughing as he was; and he knew that his decision was already upon him.

One whole night he thought. Then he advertised in a city paper:

> A man with a few months more to live would like nice people to adopt his little girl, six, blue eyes, curls. References required.

They came in a limousine, as he had hoped that they would come. Their clothes were as he had hoped. They had with them a little girl who cried: "Is this my little sister?" On which the woman in the smart frock said sharply:

"Now then, you do as mama tells you and keep out of this or we'll leave you here and take this darling little girl away with us."

So Bill looked at this woman and said steadily that he had now other plans for his little girl. He watched the great blue car roll away. "For the land sake!" said the woman next door when she heard. "You done her out of a fortune. You hadn't the right—a man in your health." And when other cars came, and he let them go, this woman told her husband that Bill ought to be reported to the authorities.

The man and woman who walked into Bill's shop one morning were still mourning their own little girl.

The woman was not sad—only sorrowful, and the man, who was tender of her, was a carpenter. In a blooming of his hope and his dread, Bill said to them: "You're the ones." When they asked: "How long before we can have her?" Bill said: "One day more."

That day he spent in the shop. It was summer and Minna was playing in the yard. He could hear the words of her songs. He cooked their supper and while she ate, he watched. When he had tucked her in her bed, he stood in the dark hearing her breathing. "I'm a little girl tonight—kiss me," she had said, but he shook his head. "A big girl, a big girl," he told her.

When they came for her the next morning, he had her ready and her little garments were ready, washed and mended, and he had mended her doll. "Minna's never been for a visit!" he told her buoyantly. And when she ran toward him, "A big girl, a big girl," he reminded her.

He stood and watched the man and woman walking down the street with Minna between them. They had brought her a little blue parasol in case the parting should be hard. This parasol Minna held bobbing above her head, and she was so absorbed in looking up at the blue silk that she did not remember to turn and wave her hand.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR READING

Enumerate the ways in which Bill showed his love for Minna.

Why did he not let the limousine people take her, rather than give her to the two who mourned?

Write a story about Minna in her new home.

Read Nunnally Johnson's "Good Old Uncle Homer" (*Short Stories for College Classes,* Williams, D. Appleton & Co.), or

Stephen Crane's "The Angel Child" (*Whilomville Stories,* Harper & Bros.), and compare the little girls of these stories with Minna.

Read Elizabeth Alexander's "Fifty-two Weeks for Florette" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1921, Doubleday), and point out the situations common to both stories.

Read Rudyard Kipling's *Little Tobrah,* and compare the character of the Indian child with those of the American children in the stories just mentioned.

Read Honoré Willsie Morrow's "Tad Lincoln's Spy" (*Hearst's International and Cosmopolitan,* March, 1928). What do you think about the little girl of this story? What of the son of Abraham Lincoln?

Read Stephen Morehouse Avery's "Never in This World." How does the situation between father and daughter differ from that in "Bill"?

"Not Wanted," by Jesse Lynch Williams, was reprinted in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1923 (Doubleday). It is also published in a separate volume (Chas. Scribner's Sons). Read it and discuss it as a story about father and son.

"Innocence," by Rose Wilder Lane, tells how a father and mother ran away with their small daughter, to save her life. You will find it in *Harper's Magazine,* April, 1922, or in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1922 (Doubleday) and reprinted in other volumes. What do you think of the character of Uncle Charlie? his wife? Mary Alice?

"The Little Girl from Town," by Ruth Suckow, portrays country children entertaining a city child. You will find this story in *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1927, and also in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1927 (Doubleday). Write a story showing how the little girl entertained the country children when they visited her in the city.

Read Mary Wilkins Freeman's "Big Sister Solly" (*The Copy-Cat,* Harper & Bros.), to learn how an orphan child found a sister and lost her.

THE WUTHLESS DOG

BY

FRANKLIN HOLT

Franklin Holt

Franklin Holt is the pseudonym of Russell M. Coryell, whose father was better known as the original Nick Carter. Russell was born December 28, 1891, at Cornwall, New York; had a year at DeWitt Clinton High School, New York City; a year at the Storm King School on Cornwall Heights, and one year at Harvard. He would have been a graduate of the class of 1914, but went to California where, within two years, he worked in a department store, as artist's model, assistant trainer to a world's lightweight champion prize-fighter, machinist, bell-boy, society editor of the Santa Barbara *Independent,* and swimming instructor in San Francisco. From these varied occupations, it is clear that young Coryell would follow the example of his father as a writer. After a year in the East, he went back to California where he was instructor of English, drawing, and chemistry in a boys' private school, and assistant in the Rhead Potteries of Santa Barbara. Later, he was bookkeeper in a gold mine, then helper on a cattle ranch in the high Sierras. In 1916, he sailed for Italy as special correspondent of the Los Angeles *Times.* He declares that he failed as a correspondent; in any event, he became English instructor in the Berlitz School of Genoa before working as shipchandler with a British firm till the end of the war. In Trieste, he was manager of the Adriatic Marine Supply Company and there he was married to a Venetian girl. From Trieste he went to Fiume, to open a branch of his company; from Fiume he and his wife escaped when it was bombarded, and to Fiume he returned and lived through the bubonic plague. After further adventures, in Paris, he returned to America, where he has been a staff writer and of late begun to publish short stories. He lives half of every year in Maine, where he has a big garden of transplanted wild flowers, with his wife, son, two police dogs and several hives of bees.

THE WUTHLESS DOG[1]

UP in the wild mountain lands of Idaho, thirty miles from the nearest neighbor, a twelve-year-old boy and a collie had stolen away from work and were romping. They should have been down in the canyon pasture hunting for the three cows and driving them back to the barn to be milked and shut up for the night—safe from the attacks of the mountain-lions—but instead they had sneaked away up on to the level benches where the pines grew straight and tall and dropped a thick mat of smooth needles.

Ears and tail up, eyes roguish, bark sharp and eager, the big, tawny collie became a puppy. Almost delirious with joy, he was scampering over the pine-needles, scuttling around and around, belly close to the ground, inviting the boy Frank to chase him. Clouds of needles were flung up as the dog raced madly around the boles of the big pines, skidding at the corners, dodging the boy's clutching hands, panting with sheer delight. Thus they were when suddenly the tall, grim figure of Elias Stoorm, the boy's father, appeared through the trees.

The dog, King, saw him first and his ears dropped. Tail between his legs, head hung low, he slunk quickly away. But Frank was too stubborn and had too much pride to run away. Sullenly he stood his ground and waited till Stoorm's heavy hand seized his arm.

[1] *Scribner's Magazine,* February, 1929. Reprinted by special arrangement with author.

Grimly his father held him with one hand while with the other he unfastened the broad, thick belt from about his middle.

"Be ye goin' to belt me?" Frank demanded fiercely.

"Shore I am!" Stoorm told him. "Ye've sneaked away up here to gallywag with thet dog. Ye'r naught help to us, yer mother and me. Ye won't even fetch the cows when ye should. Shore ye'r lazy!" he added bitterly, as if he could imagine nothing worse than that to say. "Ye'r like thet sneakin', wuthless collie —nor can I seem to beat obejence into yer stupid body."

"Nor never can do, though ye hate me worse'n pizen."

Stoorm had lifted the heavy belt to bring it down on the boy, but he halted it now to stare at his son.

"Hate ye?" he repeated dazedly. Then his cheeks flushed. "Ye fool!" he cried angrily. "Ye dumb fool!" But his hand dropped from Frank's shoulder. "We don't hate ye. We'd make a man of ye. Don't talk again of hatin'—or I'll belt ye. Shore I'll belt ye hard." Stoorm looked into the boy's pale, set face, and for a moment seemed undecided. Then he gave him a quick push. "Go fetch home them cows," he said roughly. "And don't ye talk of hatin' again."

Alone with his wife, Stoorm tried with slow and groping words to tell what had taken place. Trouble was in his eyes.

"Shore I never thought to hate my father fer beltin' me!" he cried in bewilderment. "I knowed well I desarved it."

"Frank is different," Mrs. Stoorm said with a puz-

zled shake of her head. "Ye don't think maybe ye oughtn't belt him so much?"

"Shore he's got to be belted ef he's lazy!" Stoorm answered her with simple sincerity. "Ye can't leave him grow up lazy."

Mrs. Stoorm nodded, yet a worried look was in her eyes. She shot a swift glance at her husband and hesitated—as if struggling between the need to speak and the unwillingness to do so.

"There's worse'n bein' lazy," she said at last breathlessly, her cheeks paling.

Stoorm raised piercing gray eyes and looked at her.

"Ye mean?" he demanded—and then Mrs. Stoorm began to falter.

"Maybe I'm wrong," she cried. "Shore I guess I'm wrong, but——"

"But what?" Stoorm insisted.

"I mean how he is about goin' out into the dark—how he'll do most anything sooner'n leave the cabin after nightfall. Have ye seen too? Or do I mistake?" she asked anxiously—eager to be contradicted. But Stoorm did not contradict her. He dropped his head with grim consent, his rough features grown tired.

"Ye do not mistake," he answered her bitterly. "Frank is a coward. I've known it this four years—sayin' nothing. I hoped he'd grow out of it—but he gets worse." There was shame in his voice, but suddenly he clenched his big fists and his tone became harsh. "Shore I didn't think to have son that was a coward!" he cried. "He's lazy to boot. He goes shirkin' his work to sneak off with thet wuthless collie, King. An' he talks of hatin'! Shore I'll larn him to

talk different, and to do his tasks like all of us has to. Ef he's lazy an' a coward, I reckon a belt will change him. Sometimes I think thet dog is the fault of it. Ef he'd no dog to sneak off with, happen he might think more to his work. Shore I think I'll shoot thet King!"

Frank had been approaching the cabin as his father spoke, and he stepped into the doorway in time to hear Stoorm's last words. His face was red with the heat of hunting the cows—one of which had hidden away and could not be found—but now the color suddenly drained away, leaving him pale under his tan. He stood stock-still, staring wide-eyed at Stoorm—horror in his features.

"Ye'd shoot King?" he gasped. "Ye'd shoot my dawg!" His voice quavered and he raised a stiff hand, pointing it at Stoorm. "Ef ye kill my dawg, I'll kill ye!" he cried with wild vehemence. His lower lip was white and trembling, but his eyes were fierce. "Damn ye! Damn ye!" he shouted. Then he flashed around and fled toward the woods, a strangled noise issuing from his throat. At his heels trotted the tawny, big-boned collie—the "wuthless" King. And Mrs. Stoorm turned tremulously to her husband.

"Ye'll not shoot his dog?" she pleaded. "Ye'll not. King is all he has fer playin'. Ye wouldn't do it."

But Stoorm's face was flushed red with anger. He stared with stern eyes after the retreating figures of Frank and King. Yet he spoke no word at once—waiting till he could do so calmly—for it was his creed never to answer in the heat of anger. Stoorm prided

himself on his justice and his unshakable holding to a word once spoken.

"Shore he cannot speak to his father of killin'!" he began grimly. "For thet he shall be punished—an' fer the blasphemy. As fer King—I've made up my mind. This will I do: The very first time him an' thet dog sneak off together from work, then will I shoot a charge of buckshot through King's head. I'll warn Frank thet—and shore I'll belt him when he comes back. I'll larn him to talk of killin' to his father."

And belt him he did when Frank returned an hour later, just as the dark shadows began to fall across the mountain valley. At the same time, with measured grimness, he warned the boy that he meant to shoot King at the very next sneaking away of the two from work.

Frank took the punishment as stoically as he could, but the heavy belt at last beat down his will and he began to bellow. It was then that an ugly snarl was heard outside the cabin, and King flashed through the doorway, fangs bared and a wolf-growl in his throat. Straight for Stoorm's jugular he went. Another man, less strong and less quick, would have gone down under the assault, and perhaps never come up again, but Stoorm was all muscle and had the quickness of the pioneer. In mid-air he caught the collie, his big hands circling the throat and beginning with his enormous strength to throttle the dog.

"Ye'd jump at me, would ye?" he addressed the dog. "Ye wuthless, treacherous dog. Ye'll never do it again." Already the collie was gasping. He was

nearly gone—and from Frank there rang a desperate cry.

"Don't kill King, father! Father! He was defendin' me!" the boy sobbed. "Thet's no treachery."

"Elias!" came the pleading, frightened voice of Mrs. Stoorm. "Ye must be just." She knew how to reach his pride. "The dog was defendin' Frank. He don't know better."

Stoorm stood motionless for a few moments, his strong fingers relaxing a little their terrible throttling hold on King's throat. Then grimly he walked to the door of the cabin and flung King outside, standing there with heaving chest, watching while the gasping dog regained its feet.

"It's true," he said with slow justice. "The dog was defendin' Frank. I'm glad ye stopped me afore I killed him—but he must larn thet I'm not to be attacked. Ef ye can't larn him, he dies."

King was gasping and growling. He had been close to death, but his spirit was indomitable. As he faced Stoorm now, his hair was bristling, his lips curled back, and between closed fangs there issued a ferocious snarl. There was in his glowing eyes the fury of his wild wolf ancestors. He crouched and began to creep forward.

"Frank!" commanded Stoorm sharply. "Call King off! Ef he comes at me again, I'll kill him. Call him quick! He's goin' to jump!"

"King!" screamed the boy, his voice breaking shrilly. "Down! Down, King!" He stepped in front of his father with harsh, high-pitched commands, advancing on the collie as if to strike him.

King winced, cringing and closing his eyes, his head turned on one side as if to receive a humiliating blow. He didn't know what he had done that was wrong, but he knew Frank was angry. Belly to the ground, he crept toward the boy, begging forgiveness and trying to lick the latter's bare feet; and Frank turned a pale face pleadingly back to his father.

"He'll not do it again!" he cried.

A queer laugh came from Stoorm's throat.

"Wouldn't he?" he said. "Shore he just would, did I but raise the belt agin ye once more." He eyed King grimly. "Now mind ye, I've said I'll shoot him ef he leads ye away from work again. I've said it—and shore I'll do it. Tie him up now. The dog shall be punished fer jumpin' at me. He'll be fair sick to be separated from ye. As fer ye—ye'll go fetch home the other cow thet hid out on ye. She's calved, I reckon—and hid herself—but she's got to be found. The mountain-lions are quick to smell a new-born calf."

Frank looked away into the rapidly gathering gloom and caught his breath.

"It's gettin' dark, father," he faltered.

His mother saw the fear in his eyes and looked pleadingly at Stoorm, but the latter pressed his lips together.

"The sooner ye go the sooner ye shall be back," he said. "The cow must be fetched home. Ef ye'd not shirked it earlier ye'd have found her. But ye sneaked off with thet dog. Now I say ye shall go get her."

Frank gulped, looking at his mother—but she shook

her head, for she knew there was no changing Stoorm now.

"Ye best go quickly, Frank," she told him.

"Kin I take King?" But Stoorm shook his head.

"The dog stays tied. I said it. Ye shall go alone. It is fer a punishment. And mind ye do not come back without the cow. Shore ye'll neither eat nor sleep till she is found. Now go!"

"King would help me find her, father," Frank persisted. "Let King go."

"I said no!" Stoorm answered. "The dog stays tied."

"I can't find her alone," Frank said sullenly.

"What?" Stoorm demanded sternly. "Do ye say ye won't?" His clear gray eyes flashed anger. "Go!" he commanded. "Go *now!* Or shore I'll belt ye again."

From King there came a deep-throated growl, and Stoorm wheeled on him, pointing a threatening finger.

"Tie thet dawg! And by God!"—it was rarely that Stoorm ever used a blasphemy— "By God! Ef ye don't go quick I'll shoot yer dawg now. Shore I'll shoot him anyhow ef ye dare come back without the cow. Mind I've said it. Go!"

"I'm afeered, father," Frank gasped. "Ye'll not make me go alone in the dark—not up the canyon. There's lions and bears out nights. Don't make me go."

"Ye may take a lantern and the small rifle," Stoorm told him grimly. "Ef ye'r afeered it's because ye'r a coward—an' I'll not have son thet's a coward. I'll larn ye different. Ye'll go alone. I've said it—an' ye

know I cannot alter my word. Ye'll find thet cow though ye look all night."

There fell a silence then out in the darkness beside the log cabin. Mrs. Stoorm's hands were clenched tight one in the other, tense with fear lest Frank should disobey his father, for she understood keenly the boy's dread of the darkness. Stoorm, too, was tense. With a sick feeling he knew that if Frank did refuse or shirk it, he would have to make good his threat on King. He would have to belt the boy as he never had before.

"Frank!" he said harshly—and neither wife nor son suspected the anxiety back of that grim voice. "Frank! Shore ye better be startin' quick!" He strode into the cabin, took an old rifle from the wall, loaded it, and handed it with a handful of extra shells to Frank. His mother gave him a lighted lantern. But still the boy did not move. His mother felt him shaking with fright.

"Up in the far end of the canyon, Frank," she said to him. "The cows always hide-out up there. There's naught to be afeered of. The lions won't touch ye—not 'less they're cornered or wounded—nor the bears. Go now," she coaxed with a brave voice. "I'll have a bite to eat fer yer when ye come back." She pushed him gently.

"Give King something to eat now," Frank mumbled. The dog was straining at the unaccustomed rope about his neck. "Good-by, old King!" Frank told him. "Be a good dog. Lie down." He was trying to hide his fear in speech, but Mrs. Stoorm heard the tremor in his voice.

"Mind, ye don't shirk it," she whispered, her voice suddenly breaking. "Ye should have done it earlier." She gave him a final, frantic push and hurried back into the cabin.

His father watching grimly, King pulling at his rope and whimpering, Frank went off into the darkness—lantern in one hand and heavy rifle in the other. The lantern cast his shadow against the pine trunks and made fear clutch his heart. Two hundred yards from the cabin, when its lights had been lost to view, Frank halted. Under his ribs his heart hammered. His throat was dry. He could hear King yelping frantically, miserable at being deserted.

"Old Kingie dog," Frank said softly, trembling—desiring the dog's company as never before—but the sound of his whispered voice was so ghastly to his ears that he shivered and held his breath out there in the blackness under the pine-trees. The forest silence made him swallow hard with quick dread—and clenching his jaws he pushed on.

Presently he came out from under the tall pines into the mouth of the canyon bottom. Overhead he could see the sky and stars. The moon would be up in another hour. But even without it, in the clear sky of the mountain altitude, the stars gave him a dim light, enough to distinguish the dark clumps of cedar that were scattered through the pasture-land. Behind them the lost cow might be hidden. Night animals could crouch there too. The swinging lantern made their shadows sway back and forth and sent fear clutching at his throat. The impulse to turn back and run for home almost overcame him. A belting

was nothing as compared with his dread of the dark. It was only his father's threat to shoot King that made him keep on.

Standing still, Frank listened to see if he could catch sound of the cow. Far away on the hilltop there came the lonely bark of a coyote, and Frank had suddenly to swallow the lump of fright that rose in his throat. He knew his father said a coyote was harmless, but it was a beast of the night, and he had heard that coyotes followed in the wake of the mountain-lions to eat up whatever the fierce cats might leave. He began then to call for the lost cow as he did in the daytime, but the call sounded weird and uncanny to his ears as it carried on the still night air up along the rocks of the canyon and across to the far mountainside—the coyotes taking up the echo and barking it from hilltop to hilltop.

Even the collie, King, half a mile away—back at the cabin—picked up the call as he lay tethered and began suddenly a frightful struggle to free himself, backing away from the cord and trying to slip it off over his head. Mrs. Stoorm heard him and went to the door.

Anxiously she watched him as he leaped against the rope, snarling, whining, almost strangling himself.

"Elias," she asked, "ye don't think the dog will do itself ahurt. He's most choking himself. Could ye not loose him now?"

Stoorm's reply was clear and decided.

"Have I not said he should stay tied? Would ye have me alter my word? This is fer a punishment."

Mrs. Stoorm nodded submissively. Then she looked

off into the darkness toward the canyon and her hands clasped themselves. At her feet King had suddenly stopped his leaping and stood with nose in the air, back hairs bristling. A low growl started in his throat and once more he began plunging at his rope. It was as if he had all at once gone out of his head. Mrs. Stoorm saw and her hands gripped each other tighter.

"What is it, King?" she asked with husky whisper. She looked off into the night again and then went nervously back into the cabin. Stoorm was busy with a broken strap-buckle and she said no word, though her ears continued to listen to the struggling King.

And out in the canyon bottom Frank kept up the hunt. Clutching the heavy rifle tight, he pushed on, eyes roving fearfully to right and left, fighting the impulse to look behind, for a backward look always sent a thrill of fear up his spine.

It must be as his mother had said, that the cow was up in the far end of the canyon. When calving they had an instinct to secrete themselves, and up at that end the canyon walls were broken into long, narrow shelf-like benches up which the cows would go and hide-out in some nook where the shelf widened and a clump of cedars had sprung up to screen them. Ideal hiding-places they were, for they frequently terminated abruptly—the shelf dropping away and leaving only the one approach up the narrow path in the mountain wall. Easy to guard—a sheer wall above and another below.

It was from one of these ledges that Frank heard the first response from the lost cow. It was an appealing moo-oo in answer to his call, and sounded some twenty

or thirty feet above the canyon bottom. His heart leaped joyfully.

"She's calved shore," he told himself, for he recognized the plaintive note in her reply. He moved forward more quickly then, searching along the canyon wall for the beginning of the slanting shelf that would lead him up. It wasn't hard to find—a three-foot-wide path projecting from the solid wall of rock. The lantern showed it clearly—and Frank found fresh cow signs. He called again and started up. He had gone perhaps fifty yards when suddenly in the narrow path ahead of him there came an angry, frightened spit that brought him to a sudden stop, cold with fear, the hair on his head prickling. By the light of his lantern he saw a young, partly grown, mountain-lion kitten. Its eyes glowed green and it was crouching, short ears flat —badly scared—almost as badly as Frank.

With heart hammering, the boy began to back down the slanting ledge. He might have shot the kitten, but he was too frightened. He was really not in danger yet. The animal would let him get away. It was as eager as he—only dangerous when cornered. But then happened something unexpected. The cow with her calf suddenly got wind of the mountain-lion on the shelf to her hiding-place—a menace to her calf—and in an instant she was no longer a gentle cow but a furious mother. She had never encountered a lion before, never killed one certainly, but she knew how it should be done. With a bellow she charged down the rock path upon the young lion.

The cub was trapped. He made a vain attempt to scramble up the steep canyon wall, but fell back.

Sliding, scratching, spitting, and screaming he fell back almost under the cow's feet—and she with an age-old instinct plunged forward on him with bent knees, crushing the breath out of him, breaking his ribs, kneading him with relentless strokes—and the kitten sent forth an appeal for succor. It knew its mother was near.

Frank, shaking with fright, turned on the ledge and started running down. He wasn't sure that the enraged cow might not turn on him also.

From the canyon bottom came a scream like an hysterical woman. The female mountain-lion, mother of the kitten, had heard his death wail and was speeding toward him with long, frantic bounds. Up the canyon wall where it was only ten feet high she leaped at one bound. Ahead of her she smelled man, she smelled cow, she smelled new-born calf, and she smelled the blood of her kitten. Rage overcame fear and she galloped on. A turn in the ledge brought her and Frank face to face, not thirty feet apart.

Frank screamed, the lantern flew from his hand and went out as the chimney was shattered. He heard the sibilant spit of the mountain-lioness and flung his rifle to his shoulder. He was shaking like a leaf and could see scarcely anything. The rifle swayed and wove circles as he sought to steady it. It had no aim; but he fired anyway. The next instant he was knocked down and nearly trampled on as the mother cow charged clumsily down the path after her next assailant—the lioness. Head lowered and tossing she plunged along the rocky path. If her horns or her knees struck the animal she might kill it as she had

the kitten. But this was a full-grown lion, more agile, more terrible.

The cow swept on. Rage made her almost blind. She lunged for where the lioness should be—but the beast had bounded high up against the rock wall and down over the cow's back—avoiding the horns and hoofs. The cow tried to swerve and guard her rear but the path was too narrow for such a manœuvre and as a result she plunged off, crashing into a thick growth of cedars on the canyon bottom not badly hurt but tangled and caught beyond her powers to extricate herself.

Between the lioness and her kitten there was now only Frank. He had got to his feet again and crammed another shell into the rifle. Breath coming in dry, painful gasps, blood athrill with fright, he stood pointing the rifle down the path—seeing nothing. He could clearly smell the strong, wild odor of the lioness, however. He could hear her spit and snarl, but he dared not fire, for there would be no time to load again and he must make it certain. Only to wound her would be worse than not hitting her at all. Scarcely knowing what he did, he began to back up the steep path toward the cedars where the cow had hidden-out—the lioness stalking him, the blood of her young growing stronger in her nostrils, making her snarl ferociously.

Back in the Stoorm cabin, to the ears of the father and mother had come the echo of Frank's rifle, and they had stepped quickly to the door. Stoorm looked keenly at the furious struggling dog.

"Frank's in trouble!" he cried. "The dog knows

it." He stooped swiftly and unfastened the rope about King's neck—the dog flashing off into the darkness along Frank's trail. "Shore I done wrong to tie him," he said grimly. Then with quick stride he entered the cabin and snatched down his rifle from the wall—and both man and woman started running through the darkness toward the cattle-canyon. Fear gripped them, but had they known the truth they would have been in clear panic.

Frank was backing away up the rocky path, expecting a rush from the lioness at every step. He knew her kitten was behind him, though he was not sure that it was dead. The moon had just topped the mountain and by its light he made out the tawny-gray form of the lioness flattened to the rock and advancing with switching tail. Her eyes glowed green and he knew she was preparing to spring.

Bang! His gun went off involuntarily, hardly aimed at all, but a maddened scream from the lioness told him it had struck her somewhere. He saw her roll over twice on the ledge and then leap to her feet with a blood-curdling screech.

Wild panic mastered the boy then. With a shriek he turned and fled up the ledge toward the platform of level ground where the cedars made a group, almost tripping over the dead kitten and running fairly into the tottering, new-born calf that had come wandering out from its hiding-place in unhappy search for its mother. Behind him bounded the snarling lioness. One more jump would land her on the lad's shoulders. A swift rip of her terrible claws, her great teeth buried in his neck—and that would be the end.

But the last jump was never made, for behind her on the narrow ledge there came racing a flashing, tawny form—the collie King! Up the incline he charged, a terrible, deep-throated snarl in his throat—the challenge of a fighting collie.

From the lioness there issued a savage battle-scream and she wheeled to meet the dog. In mid-air, with front paws spread wide as the fighting felines do, claws thrown out, the lioness met King's onslaught. The dog had sprung—collie fashion—for the great cat's throat. The two bodies met with furious impact, the lioness bearing King down, for she was huge in comparison to the dog.

There was a mad whirl of locked forms that carried them up-hill onto the broader shelf where Frank and the frightened calf stood flattened against the rock wall. A cloud of dust arose around them in the moonlight. Over and over they whirled in a confused brown and gray mass, the lioness screaming savagely and King horribly silent. He had his teeth locked at the cat's throat, biting ferociously for the jugular—but the lion's fur was thick and the fur filled his mouth.

It wasn't a fair fight. The dog had no chance. With all his courage, he was no match for the lion's four, fearful, ripping feet that were digging and tearing at his belly. And it was only a question of seconds before the lioness would find her chance to sink her jaws into the dog's shoulder. Then the fight would be over.

Frank saw this and knew that if he hoped to save his own life he must run quickly—yet he did not run.

He had forgotten his personal fear in the danger that menaced King. He saw those terrible, clawing hind feet of the lioness gouging at King's vitals, and red rage filled him.

More swiftly than he had ever done it before in his life, Frank clapped another shell into the old rifle and took a step closer to the furious mêlée of dog and lion. Then he raised the rifle. It did not waver as he covered the lion's body and waited for a chance to shoot for the heart—a difficult thing to do with both animals tumbling over each other; but his chance came. He pulled the trigger. The gun roared—and the savage beast leaped high into the air, King still clinging heroically to her throat. Together they landed in a still heap—and lay there inert—neither dog nor lioness moving.

"Old Kingie dog!" sobbed Frank wildly. "Old Kingie dog!" He knelt down and with caressing hands pulled the brave, torn figure of the dog away from the lioness—and King lifted his head then to lick the boy's wrist. "Good old Kingie dog!" Frank cried tremulously. "He's clawed ye awful. But shore ye won't die, will ye, Kingie?"

King looked up with eyes from which even his agony could not drive his adoration, and he moved a tired paw in courageous effort to "shake hands." His plumy tail rose bravely from the ground to tell his master how great was his love and how great his pride that he had fought for him—and then it fell back motionless.

The boy began to cry from a rent heart. Burying his face in King's shaggy fur, he gave way to the grief

that was swelling inside and breaking his control. No belting had ever wrung such racking sobs from him.

Stoorm and his wife found them like that when they came hurrying breathlessly up along the ledge path. A strange, awesome group: The dead lioness, the mangled body of King, the curved back of the boy with its heaving shoulders—and the lonely, stiff-legged calf who stood close to Frank's back with its pathetic desire for companionship.

"Be ye hurt, Frank?" demanded the frightened mother. "Be ye hurt, boy?"

"No," he told her, "not me—but King's dying, mother." Tears were streaming down his cheeks and his hands gripped the dog's hair convulsively. "Look how awful he's clawed up!" he cried, choking over his sobs. "He's all blood." His boy's voice rose, then, fierce in its bitterness, and he looked at Stoorm. "And ye—thet'll make ye glad to see him bleed, fer ye hated him. Ye'r rid of him—and most ye was ridded of me, too. Then ye'd have been satisfied. But King got away from ye and saved me." His words came with gasps and gulps, nearly strangled by his sobs. Then once more he buried his face in King's thick ruff. "Old Kingie boy!" he cried bitterly. "Don't ye die, old Kingie!"

Stoorm's rugged, pioneer face had lost its sternness. There was pain in it and a struggling emotion that made his features work with queer, spasmodic jerks, the mouth unsteady.

"Did King save ye, Frank?" he demanded thickly. "Shore I knew he was all grit, thet dog." He began

an awkward, timid movement with his hand toward Frank's shoulder—but the boy did not see it.

"Aye," he answered bitterly, "King didn't fear *ye,* anyway. Thet's why ye hated him—like ye hate me—an' ye tied him up, hopin' the lions would git me—but King got away from ye—damn ye!" he cried through his tears.

Stoorm drew back his hand, wincing and drawing a quick breath. Awkward, bewildered, hurt—he stood with twitching features, unaccustomed tears starting from his eyes.

Mrs. Stoorm watching him, reading him better than he read himself, felt her heart contract. With quick beating pulse and tremulous voice she put a hand on his arm.

"Elias," she said, "Elias, why do ye not tell the boy everything? How can he know it was *ye* thet let King loose ef ye do not tell him? Son," she added with ringing earnestness, "ye'll talk no more of hatin'. Look at yer father and tell me do ye see hate in his eyes."

The boy raised his head, the face tear-stained and haggard, and into his eyes there came an expression of wondering eagerness. He stood up and faced Stoorm, the latter putting a timid hand on his shoulder. Frank swayed toward him—but from King there came a sudden, warning growl and he staggered to his feet. He had misunderstood Stoorm's gesture. He thought Frank was to be belted again.

With fangs bared and eyes ferocious—using every last atom of his waning strength—King sprang at Stoorm, burying his teeth in the man's trouser leg.

Then his shaking legs gave way under him, his loyal jaws parted—and King sank to the ground, too weak to do more.

Stoorm stooped and touched the dog—King growling but unable to move. Tear's rolled down Stoorm's stern cheeks. He caressed the brave, bloody body.

"Pore old Kingie!" he said thickly. "Shore I don't hate him, boy—nor you—nor never did do. Shore I been a fool." His voice broke and he took Frank into his rough arms—the first time the boy could remember. "Frank!" he choked. "Shore ye'r wuth yer weight of gold—both of ye."

Frank stared with shining eyes.

"Ye mean, father," he asked tremulously, "ye mean thet ye—ye *like* King and me?"

"Shore I mean a sight more'n I kin say, boy," Stoorm told him. "An' I'll never belt ye again. An' I take back about yer bein' a coward. Boy," he pleaded, "kin ye forgive me?" His big hands clutched clumsily at Frank's shoulders.

"Forgive ye, father?" the boy cried unsteadily. "Shore ye was right. I was plumb lazy—an' turrible skeert. I desarved what I got—and wuss—but I thought ye hated us, me and King. Thet's why—thet's why we hated *ye.*" Then he buried his face in Stoorm's breast and clung there while a new sort of joyful sobbing shook his boy's frame. "An,' father," he cried after a few moments, "father, shore ef ye hadn't loosed King, the lion would have got me." He dropped beside the dog once more, looking up with glowing confidence at Stoorm. "Ye'll not let King die, father, not now. Shore ye'll keep him from dyin'."

Stoorm stooped down beside the collie and with gentle hands gathered him up. Then holding him close against him he stood straight, the dog growling weakly.

"Tell him it's all right, Frank. Tell him we're goin' to save him. Shore a dog like King kin never die of just fightin' with a lion."

QUESTIONS

What is the setting of this story?

Name the chief characters in order of importance. Is the title good? Explain the spelling, "wuthless."

Relate the incident that ends with Stoorm's dropping the belt and ordering Frank to "fetch home them cows."

What do you learn about Frank's nature from the conversation between his mother and father?

What is the reason for Stoorm's saying, "I think I'll shoot that King"? What is the effect of the threat on Frank?

Relate the incident that occurred after Frank came home, "an hour later."

Why was he sent out at once into the "gathering gloom"?

Why was King tied up this time?

Tell what happened to Frank after he "went off into the darkness."

At what point exactly does the story break off from Frank and return to the cabin? Are you in suspense at this point? Are you afraid that Frank may be killed? Did you expect the dog to break away or did you expect Stoorm to release him?

Did you think King had been killed when you read, "The dog had no chance"?

If fear cannot be controlled, can it be supplanted by another passion? How was it with Frank?

Is Frank's question, "Ye like King and me?" in character, or would he have kept silent?

Is the end too sentimental for the characters, or do you think it would have been just so? Why?

Point out good examples of dialect in this story.

Write an account of the journey back to the Stoorm cabin, or write an account of King's convalescence.

STORIES ABOUT BOYS AND DOGS

Charles Alexander, "As a Dog Should" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1922, Doubleday).

Howard Brubaker, "Dudley and the Cattycornered Dog" (*American Magazine,* December, 1927).

Samuel A. Derieux, "The Trial in Tom Belcher's Store" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1919, Doubleday); "The Destiny of Dan VI" (*American Magazine,* March, 1917); "The Crisis in 25" (*American Magazine,* February, 1918). These and others may be found in *Frank of Freedom Hill* (Samuel A. Derieux, Doubleday).

Ouida (Louise de la Ramée), "A Dog of Flanders" (reprinted in numerous volumes).

See, also, the list on page 303.

THERE ARE SMILES

BY

Ring W. Lardner

Ring W. Lardner

Ring W. Lardner was born at Niles, Michigan, March 6, 1885. After high school and a year at the Armour Institute of Technology, he reported for the South Bend, Indiana, *Times*. For twelve years or so, beginning 1907, he was either sporting writer or sporting editor of various newspapers in Chicago, Boston, and St. Louis. His *Bib Ballads* appeared in 1915, followed by *You Know Me, Al,* a collection of baseball stories that first appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*. These stories introduced to America a new humorist; later ones have familiarized his name abroad. His tales, most of which had appeared in previously published volumes, were collected in 1929 under the title, *The Round Up*. Most of these satirize stupidity and pretension; some are studies in realism; a few, such as "There Are Smiles," reveal a vein of sentiment.

THERE ARE SMILES[1]

AT the busy corner of Fifth Avenue and Forty-sixth Street there was, last summer, a traffic policeman who made you feel that he didn't have such a terrible job after all. Lots of traffic policemen seem to enjoy abusing you, sadistic complex induced by exposure to bad weather and worse drivers, and, possibly, brutal wives. But Ben Collins just naturally appeared to be having a good time whether he was scolding you or not; his large freckled face fairly beamed with joviality and refused to cloud up even under the most trying conditions.

It heartened you to look at him. It amused you to hear him talk. If what he said wasn't always so bright, the way he said it was.

Ben was around thirty years old. He was six feet four inches tall and weighed two hundred and eighteen pounds. This describes about eighty per cent of all the traffic officers between Thirty-second Street and the Park. But Ben was distinguished from the rest by his habitual good humor and—well, I guess you'd have to call it his subtlety.

For example, where Noonan or Wurtz or Carmody was content with the stock "Hey! Get over where you belong!" or "Where the hell do you think you're going?" Ben was wont to finesse.

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[1] From *Round Up,* by Ring W. Lardner. *Copyright,* 1929, by Chas. Scribner's Sons.

"How are you, Barney?" he would say to a victim halted at the curb.

"My name isn't Barney."

"I beg your pardon. The way you was stepping along, I figured you must be Barney Oldfield."

Or, "I suppose you didn't see that red light."

"No."

"Well, what did you think the other cars was stopped for? Did you think they'd all ran out of gas at once?"

Or, "What business are you in?"

"I'm a contractor."

"Well, that's a good, honorable business and, if I was you, I wouldn't be ashamed of it. I'd quit trying to make people believe I was in the fire department."

Or, "How do you like London?"

"Me? I've never been there."

"I thought that's where you got the habit of driving on the wrong side of the street."

Transgressions at Ben's corner, unless they resulted seriously, were seldom punished beyond these sly rebukes, which were delivered in such a nice way that you were kind of glad you had done wrong.

Off duty he was "a big good-natured boy," willing to take Grace to a picture, or go over to the Arnolds' and play cards, or just stay home and do nothing.

And then one morning in September, a dazzlingly new Cadillac roadster, blue with yellow trimmings, flashed down from the north, violating all the laws of common sense and of the State and City of New York. Shouts and whistles from Carmody and Noonan, at Forty-eighth and Forty-seventh, failed to check its crazy career, but Ben, first planting his huge bulk

directly in its path, giving the driver the choice of slackening speed or running into him, and then, with an alertness surprising in one so massive, sidestepping and jumping onto the running-board, succeeded in forcing a surrender at the curb half-way between his post and Forty-fifth Street.

He was almost mad and about to speak his mind in words beginning with capitals when he got his first look at the miscreant's face. It was the prettiest face he had ever seen and it wore a most impudent, ill-timed, irresistible smile, a smile that spoiled other smiles for you once for all.

"Well——" Ben began falteringly; then recovering something of his stage presence: "Where's your helmet?"

She made no reply, but continued to smile.

"If you're in the fire department," said Ben, "you ought to wear a helmet and a badge. Or paint your car red and get a sireen."

Still no reply.

"Maybe I look like a bobby. Maybe you thought you was in London where they drive on the left side of the street."

"You're cute," she said, and her voice was as thrilling as her smile. "I could stay here all morning and listen to you. That is I could, but I can't. I've got a date down on Eighth Street and I'm late for it now. And I know you're busy, too. So we mustn't keep each other any longer now. But I'd like to hear your whole line some day."

"Oh, you would!"

"Where do you live?"

"At home."

"That isn't very polite, is it? I was thinking you might live in the Bronx——"

"I do."

"——and that's on the way to Rye, where I live, so I might drive you."

"Thanks. When I die, I want to die of old age."

"Oh, I'm not a bad driver, really. I do like to go fast, but I'm careful. In Buffalo, where we lived before, the policemen all knew I was careful and they generally let me go as fast as I wanted to."

"This ain't Buffalo. And this ain't no speedway. If you want to go fast, stay off Fifth Avenue."

The girl looked him right in the eye. "Would you like that?"

"No," said Ben.

She smiled at him again. "What time are you through?"

"Four o'clock," said Ben.

"Well," said the girl, "some afternoon I may be going home about then——"

"I told you I wasn't ready to die."

"I'd be extra careful."

Ben suddenly realized that they were playing to a large staring audience and that, for once, he was not the star.

"Drive on!" he said in his gruffest tone. "I'm letting you go because you're a stranger, but you won't get off so easy next time."

"I'm very, very grateful," said the girl. "Just the same I don't like being a stranger and I hope you won't excuse me on that ground again."

Which remark, accompanied by her radiant smile, caused Mr. Collins, hitherto only a bathroom singer, to hum quite loudly all the rest of his working day snatches of a gay Ohman and Arden record that his wife had played over and over the night before.

His relief, Tim Martin, appeared promptly at four, but Ben seemed in no hurry to go home. He pretended to listen to two new ones Tim had heard on the way in from Flushing, one about a Scotchman and some hotel towels and one about two Heebs in a night club. He managed to laugh in the right place, but his attention was on the northbound traffic, which was now none of his business.

At twenty minutes past four he said good-by to Martin and walked slowly south on the east side of the street. He walked as far as Thirty-sixth, in vain. Usually he caught a ride home with some Bronx or north suburban motorist, but now he was late and had to pay for his folly by hurrying to Grand Central and standing up in a subway express.

"I was a sucker!" he thought. "She probably drove up some other street on purpose to miss me. Or she might have came in on one of them cross streets after I'd walked past it. I ought to stuck at Forty-fourth a while longer. Or maybe some other fella done his duty and had her locked up. Not if she smiled at him, though."

But she wouldn't smile like that at everybody. She had smiled at him because she liked him, because she really thought he was cute. Yes, she did! That was her regular line. That was how she had worked on them Buffalo fellas. "Cute!" A fine word to use on

a human Woolworth Building. She was kidding. No, she wasn't; not entirely. She'd liked his looks as plenty other gals had, and maybe that stuff about the fire department and London had tickled her.

Anyway, he had seen the most wonderful smile in the world and he still felt warm from it when he got home, so warm that he kissed his wife with a fervor that surprised her.

When Ben was on the day shift, he sometimes entertained Grace at supper with an amusing incident or two of his work. Sometimes his stories were pure fiction and she suspected as much, but what difference did it make? They were things that ought to have happened even if they hadn't.

On this occasion he was wild to talk about the girl from Rye, but he had learned that his wife did not care much for anecdotes concerning pretty women. So he recounted one-sided arguments with bungling drivers of his own sex which had very little foundation in fact.

"There was a fella coming south in a 1922 Buick and the light changed and when it was time to go again, he thought he was starting in second, and it was reverse instead, and he backed into a big Pierce from Greenwich. He didn't do no damage to the Pierce and only bent himself a little. But they'd have held up the parade ten minutes talking it over if I hadn't bore down.

"I got the Buick fella over to the curb and I said to him, 'What's the matter? Are you homesick?' So he said what did I mean, homesick and I said, 'Well, you was so anxious to get back to wherever you come from that you couldn't even wait to turn around.'

"Then he tried to explain what was the matter, just like I didn't know. He said this was his first trip in a Buick and he was used to a regular gear shift.

"I said, 'That's fine, but this ain't no training-camp. The place to practise driving is four blocks farther down, at Forty-second. You'll find more automobiles there and twicet as many pedestrians and policemen, and besides, they've got street-cars and a tower to back into.'

"I said, 'You won't never learn nothing in a desert like this.' You ought to heard the people laugh."

"I can imagine!" said Grace.

"Then there was a Jordan, an old guy with a gray beard. He was going to park right in front of Kaskel's. He said he wouldn't be more than half an hour. I said, 'Oh, that's too bad! I wished you could spend the week-end.' I said, 'If you'd let us knew you was coming, we'd have arranged some parties for you.' So he said, 'I've got a notion to report you for being too fresh.'

"So I said, 'If you do that, I'll have you arrested for driving without your parents' consent.' You ought to heard them laugh. I said, 'Roll, Jordan, roll!' You ought to heard them."

"I'll bet!" said Grace.

Ben fell into a long, unaccustomed silence.

"What are you thinking about?"

It came out against his better judgment. "There was a gal in a blue Cadillac."

"Oh! There was! What about her?"

"Nothing. Only she acted like it was her Avenue and I give her hell."

"What did you say to her?"

"I forget."

"Was she pretty?"

"I didn't notice. I was sore."

"You!"

"She all but knocked me for a corpse."

"And you probably just smiled at her."

"No. She done the smiling. She smiled—" He broke off and rose from the table. "Come on, babe. Let's go to the Franklin. Joe Frisco's there. And a Chaplin picture."

Ben saw nothing of the blue Cadillac or its mistress the rest of that week, but in all his polemics he was rehearsing lines aimed to strengthen her belief in his "cuteness." When she suddenly appeared, however, late on the following Tuesday afternoon, he was too excited to do anything but stare, and he would have lost an opportunity of hearing her enchanting voice if she hadn't taken the initiative. Northbound, she stopped at the curb a few feet above his corner and beckoned to him.

"It's after four," she said. "Can't I drive you home?"

What a break! It was his week on the late shift.

"I just come to work. I won't be off till midnight."

"You're mean! You didn't tell me you were going to change."

"I change every week. Last week, eight to four; this week four to twelve."

"And next week eight to four?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, I'll just have to wait."

He couldn't say a word.

"Next Monday?"

He made an effort. "If you live."

She smiled that smile. "I'll live," she said. "There's an incentive."

She was on her way and Ben returned to his station, dizzy.

"Incentive, incentive, incentive," he repeated to himself, memorizing it, but when he got home at half past one, he couldn't find it in Grace's abridged Webster; he thought it was spelled with an *s*.

The longest week in history ended. A little before noon on Monday the Cadillac whizzed past him going south and he caught the word "later." At quitting time, while Tim Martin was still in the midst of his first new one about two or more Heebs, Ben was all at once aware that she had stopped right beside him, was blocking the traffic, waiting for him.

Then he was in her car, constricting his huge bulk to fit it and laughing like a child at Tim's indelicate ejaculation of surprise.

"What are you laughing at?"

"Nothing. I just feel good."

"Are you glad to be through?"

"Yes. Today."

"Not always?"

"I don't generally care much."

"I don't believe you do. I believe you enjoy your job. And I don't see how you can because it seems to me such a hard job. I'm going to make you tell me all about it as soon as we get out of this jam."

A red light stopped them at Fifty-first Street and she turned and looked at him amusedly.

"It's a good thing the top is down," she said. "You'd have been hideously uncomfortable in one more fold."

"When I get a car of my own," said Ben, "it'll have to be a Mack, and even then I'll have to hire a man to drive it."

"Why a man?"

"Men ain't all crazy."

"Honestly, I'm not crazy. Have I come near hitting anything?"

"You've just missed everything. You drive too fast and you take too many chances. But I knew it before I got in, so I can't kick."

"There isn't room for you to, anyway. Do you want to get out?"

"No."

"I doubt if you could. Where do you live?"

"Hundred and sixty-fourth, near the Concourse," said Ben.

"How do you usually go home?"

"Like this."

"And I thought I was saving you from a tiresome subway ride or something. I ought to have known you'd never lack invitations. Do you?"

"Hardly ever."

"Do the people ask you all kinds of questions?"

"Yes."

"I'm sorry. Because I wanted to and now I can't."

"Why not?"

"You must be tired of answering."

"I don't always answer the same."

"Do you mean you lie to people, to amuse yourself?"

"Sometimes."

"Oh, that's grand! Come on, lie to me! I'll ask you questions, probably the same questions they all ask, and you answer them as if I were a fool. Will you?"

"I'll try."

"Well, let's see. What shall I ask first? Oh, yes. Don't you get terribly cold in winter?"

He repeated a reply he had first made to an elderly lady, obviously a visitor in the city, whose curiosity had prompted her to cross-examine him for over twenty minutes on one of the busiest days he had ever known.

"No. When I feel chilly, I stop a car and lean against the radiator."

His present interviewer rewarded him with more laughter than was deserved.

"That's wonderful!" she said. "And I suppose when your ears are cold, you stop another car and borrow its hood."

"I'll remember that one."

"Now what next? Do you ever get hit?"

"Right along, but just glancing blows. I very seldom get knocked down and run over."

"Doesn't it almost kill you, standing on your feet all day?"

"It ain't near as bad as if it was my hands. Seriously, Madam, I get so used to it that I sleep that way nights."

"Don't the gasoline fumes make you sick?"

"They did at first, but now I can't live without them. I have an apartment near a public garage so

I can run over there any time and re-fume myself."

"How tall are you?"

"Six feet ten."

"Not really!"

"You know better, don't you? I'm six feet four, but when women ask me, I tell them anything from six feet eight to seven feet two. And they always say, 'Heavens!' "

"Which do you have the most trouble with, men drivers or women drivers?"

"Men drivers."

"Honestly?"

"Sure. There's fifty times as many of them."

"Do lots of people ask you questions?"

"No. You're the first one."

"Were you mad at me for calling you cute the other day?"

"I couldn't be mad at you."

A silence of many blocks followed. The girl certainly did drive fast and Ben might have been more nervous if he had looked ahead, but mostly his eyes were on her profile which was only a little less alluring than her smile.

"Look where we are!" she exclaimed as they approached Fordham Road. "And you live at a Hundred and sixty-fourth! Why didn't you tell me?"

"I didn't notice."

"Don't get out. I'll drive you back."

"No, you won't. I'll catch a ride. There's a fella up this way I want to see."

"You were nice to take a chance with me and not to act scared. Will you do it again?"

"Whenever you say."

"I drive in once a week. I go down to Greenwich Village to visit my sister. Generally on Mondays."

"Next Monday I'll be on the late shift."

"Let's make it the Monday after."

"That's a long ways off."

"The time will pass. It always does."

It did, but so haltingly! And the day arrived with such a threat of rain that Ben was afraid she wouldn't come in. Later on, when the threat was fulfilled and the perils of motoring trebled by a steady drizzle and slippery pavements, he was afraid she would. Prudence, he knew, was not in her make-up and if she had an engagement with her sister, nothing short of a flood would prevent her keeping it.

Just before his luncheon time, the Cadillac passed, going south. Its top was up and its squeegee flying back and forth across the front glass.

Through the rain he saw the girl smile and wave at him briefly. Traffic was thick and treacherous and both must keep their minds on it.

It was still drizzling when she reappeared and stopped for him at four.

"Isn't this a terrible day?" she said.

"Not now!"

She smiled, and in an instant he forgot all the annoyance and discomfort of the preceding hours.

"If we leave the top up, you'll get stoop-shouldered, and if we take it down, we'll be drowned."

"Leave it up. I'm all right."

"Do you mind if we don't talk much? I feel quiet."

He didn't answer and nothing more was said until they turned east at Mount Morris Park. Then:

"I could find out your name," she said, "by remembering your number and having somebody look it up. But you can save me the trouble by telling me."

"My name is Ben Collins. And I could learn yours by demanding to see your driver's license."

"Heavens! Don't do that! I haven't any. But my name is Edith Dole."

"Edith Dole. Edith Dole," said Ben.

"Do you like it?"

"It's pretty."

"It's a funny combination. Edith means happiness and Dole means grief."

"Well," said Ben, "you'll have plenty of grief if you drive without a license. You'll have it anyway if you drive fast on these kind of streets. There's nothing skiddier than car-tracks when it's raining."

They were on upper Madison and the going was dangerous. But that was not the only reason he wanted her to slow down.

Silence again until they were on the Concourse.

"Are you married?" she asked him suddenly.

"No," he lied. "Are you?"

"I will be soon."

"Who to?"

"A man in Buffalo."

Are you stuck on him?"

"I don't know. But he wants me and my father wants him to have me."

"Will you live in Buffalo?"

"No. He's coming here to be my father's partner."

"And yours?"

"Yes. Oh, dear! Here's a Hundred and sixty-fourth and I mustn't take you past it today, not in this weather. Do you think you can extricate yourself?"

He managed it with some difficulty.

"I don't suppose I'll see you again for two weeks."

"I'm afraid not," she said.

He choked down the words that wanted to come out. "Miss Dole," he said, "take my advice and don't try for no records getting home. Just loaf along and you'll be there an hour before your supper's ready. Will you? For that guy's sake in Buffalo?"

"Yes."

"And my sake, too."

Gosh! What a smile to remember!

He must walk slow and give himself a chance to calm down before he saw Grace. Why had he told the girl he wasn't married? What did she care?

Grace's greeting was a sharp command. "Take a hot bath right away! And wear your bath-robe afterwards. We won't be going anywhere tonight."

She and May Arnold had been in Mount Vernon at a card-party. They had got soaked coming home. She talked about it all through supper, thank the Lord!

After supper he tried to read, but couldn't. He listened awhile to the Ohman and Arden record which his wife couldn't get enough of. He went to bed, wishing he could sleep and dream, wishing he could sleep two weeks.

He was up early, early enough to look at the paper

before breakfast. "Woman Motorist Killed By Street-Car in Bronx." His eyes felt funny as he read: "Miss Edith Dole, twenty-two, of Rye, was instantly killed when the automobile she was driving skidded and struck a street-car at the corner of Fordham Road and Webster Avenue, the Bronx, shortly after four-thirty yesterday afternoon."

"Grace," he said in a voice that was not his own, "I forgot. I'm supposed to be on the job at seven this morning. There's some kind of a parade."

Out of the house, alone, he talked aloud to himself for the first time since he was a kid.

"I can't feel as bad as I think I do. I only seen her four or five times. I can't really feel this bad."

Well, on an afternoon two or three weeks later, a man named Hughes from White Plains, driving a Studebaker, started across Forty-sixth Street out of turn and obeyed a stern order to pull over to the curb.

"What's your hurry?" demanded the grim-faced traffic policeman. "Where the hell do you think you're going? What's the matter with you, you so-and-so?"

"I forgot myself for a minute. I'm sorry," said Mr. Hughes. "If you'll overlook it, I'll pick you up on my way home and take you to the Bronx. Remember, I give you a ride home last month? Remember? That is, it was a fella that looked like you. That is, he looked something like you. I can see now it wasn't you. It was a different fella."

QUESTIONS

Point out all the details that keep the reader informed of locality.

What is a "sadistic complex"?

Would the girl and the policeman have met other than in the way they did meet? Why did Ben like Edith? Why did she like him? What do you think about them both?

Why did Ben tell Edith he was not married? Why did she tell him she was going to be married?

Does the author use the name "Dole" as a clue to the dénouement? Point out all the forecasts that make the fatal accident appear plausible.

Is the policeman at the end of the story Ben Collins or another? Give reasons for your answer.

Read Dana Gatlin's "The Blood-Red Ruby" (*Harper's Bazar,* January, 1930), and point out the similarities between it and "There Are Smiles."

Read R. W. Child's "The Gorilla" (*Fresh Waters,* E. P. Dutton & Co.).

Write a story of how a boy saved the life of a girl or another boy.

A LIST OF STORIES OF SENTIMENT

Konrad Bercovici, "Happiness" (*Trumps,* G. P. Putnam Sons). See also *Iliana* (Boni & Liveright).

Louis Bromfield, "Let's Go to Hinky-Dink's" (*Awake and Rehearse,* Stokes). See also *Samples* (Boni & Liveright).

Zona Gale, "Annie Laurie" (*Samples,* Boni & Liveright).

Ellen Glasgow, "Romance and Sally Byrd" (*The World's Best Short Stories of 1925,* Geo. H. Doran Co.).

Dorothy Heyward, "The Young Ghost" (*McCall's Magazine,* February, 1928).

Frank O'Connor, "After Fourteen Years" (*The Best British Stories,* 1929, E. J. O'Brien, Dodd, Mead & Co.).

Mary Roberts Rinehart, "Twenty-Two" (*Aces,* G. P. Putnam Sons).

THE WHOFFING GODS

BY

NORMA PATTERSON

Norma Patterson

A native Texan, Norma Patterson was reared in Beaumont, where she received a public school education. Later she went to Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, beginning the teacher's training which she expected to continue at Columbia University. A long illness set her to spinning tales, instead, which for twelve years have delighted many readers. Her first book, *Jenny,* was published in January, 1930. She says there is no brighter page in her past than a brief season she had at teaching when she and forty small people sat in a room, loved each other very much and made gay adventure of the day's work. Of the genesis of "The Whoffing Gods," she writes: "I was walking after a hard day's work at my desk. . . . It was just at sunset, and I came abruptly on a stretch of torn-up road, and topping the little hill of excavated dirt looked down on the imposing line of iron gods, still smoking from their day's work, but motionless and sleeping. They seemed alive and majestic. On the opposite bank a small shabby boy sat hugging his knees and dreaming at them; and the ruby lanterns were strung all about."

THE WHOFFING GODS [1]

AS soon as Penny opened his eyes on that eventful morning he saw them. They filled the street for a solid block, and traffic tiptoed respectfully another way. At some still, gray hour of dawn, while the world of men slept, they had assembled, and without noise . . . these mighty monsters of an iron race.

He knew that they were more than mortal, then they must be gods. Whoffing gods, they were such a whoffing size. What connection could they have with a small, timid six-year-old in Miss Battle's Home for the Homeless, so that he felt them in his veins, and his toes and in the roots of his hair?

Later he saw them come alive upon the road there. Little figures of men moved among them, waited on them, polished and oiled them, fed them shovelfuls of coal. And they spit red hot flame and breathed fire. They had blazing eyes on their foreheads, and they knew more than men.

Miss Battle was furious. "For weeks I've got to stand the noise and bother of having the streets torn up. The smoke from the tar will be unbearable."

At the play hour all of the children large enough to climb perched on the top of the high board fence and watched monstrous things happening in the street. They resembled gray birds in a drab, wintry row. There is little variety in the faces of orphanage chil-

[1] *Chicago Tribune,* May 26, 1929. Reprinted by special permission of the author.

dren. Their expressions have struck a level, and walk there. For them there are no red letter days, no high-ups of emotion, no awful griefs, no swift, bursting happiness. These come from loving people, and belonging.

Now, before their very eyes they saw the earth, which was a fixture, shoveled up and hoisted away, and a lower story, as it were, put to things. The whoffing gods lined up and moved in heroic procession. First the scooper and lifter; then the mighty rake and the gory leveler . . . a knife blade as wide as the street, almost, and capable of slicing four orphans, end to end. Next the pounders and the mammoth roller, and the fiery toot-toot with the rich black smoke.

The orphans whispered among themselves. "They'd best be careful how far down they dig. They'll get to . . . you-know-where."

No orphan was ignorant of what seethed just beneath the crust of the earth, and who waited there with pitchfork and with tail. Miss Battle drew a lurid picture of this every day. It was a place that licked its jaws for children, and only a few impossibly cherubic ones could hope to escape.

As the hours passed they saw, with terror-filled souls, that the diggers had not been careful. They had uncovered the hole-to-hell. A tunnel with an iron cap. Worse yet, a man sat in the very street, a telephone on his head, and talked with the devil. The children were so angelic for days afterwards (fearing Miss Battle might look from a window and discover this handy proximity) that she finally grew alarmed and gave them all castor oil.

There was a loose plank in the back fence. They were forbidden to go outside. One could slip through, however, and take his chances with getting caught. Penny slipped through the loose plank every day. He stood in the mud in a sort of trance. He learned the difference in the way each piece of machinery was run. There were wheels and handles and levers and foot brakes. As each iron god passed him he drove and guided it with the driver.

He loved the Thunderer best of all. The man at the wheel of the Thunderer seemed a person apart from the world. Penny had an idea he could neither see nor hear. Cut off from external communication by the noise of his chariot, he moved in a magnificent isolation as stars and planets move. If Penny stubbed his toe and fell in the path of the Thunderer, the driver would never know and Penny would be flattened out there, a permanent part of the paving and no one the wiser.

At the end of the day when the men had departed and the roaring gods stood silent and sleeping, their tired heads lowered, then the old man came with the red lanterns. He strung them round and round the whoffing gods, and no one dared to pass here.

Often in the dead of night Penny would raise on an elbow and gaze down to where the ruby lanterns glowed and lived and made a walled-in spot of splendor for the whoffing gods. Leaning an ear against the South Wind he heard them breathe in slumber.

He grew familiar with the places where lanterns were stationed. One day he slipped out and waited. Now the lantern man was coming. Penny's heart

nearly pounded out of his chest, but he stood his ground. The old man walked slowly. He grunted as he stooped and placed a lantern on the ground by Penny. Instantly the ruby light lay on Penny's little blunt-toed, scuffed-up shoes, and on his heavy black stockings, and he stood in a blaze of glory. . . . He caught his breath sharply and looked up.

The old man, surprised to see a brief, dark object turn into a small boy, said, "Hello, youngster." From between his hat brim and his collar, his eyes twinkled down at Penny. Then he was scrunching along over the gravel with his other lanterns.

His voice, however, stayed behind. It hung in the air about three feet over Penny's head. He had an idea that, as long as he didn't move it would stay there. Penny loved a man's voice. It sounded square shouldered and hairy. It didn't make you jump, as did Miss Battle's shrill, hysterical one.

Penny had trouble getting back through the loose plank. He was at least two inches taller and his chest stuck away out. He wondered if the other prosaic orphans would dast address him. The voice went through the fence with him. "Hello, youngster." When Miss Battle's skinny hand reached out and nabbed him. "Hello, youngster." It was a sort of protection.

Every day when it was time to light the lanterns Penny slipped through the back fence. He waited by the little red house on wheels where all the lanterns slept during the day. They worked on night shift, the old man told him with a chuckle, thus turning time inside out. Penny sat spellbound while the old man

trimmed wicks and poured oil and struck matches.

His name was Jethry Numbers. He wore a green overcoat with three buttons down the front, and none of the buttons matched. He moved with slow deliberation, and spoke only after weighing things, but his eyes were keen and companionable and saw straighter and farther off than other people's eyes. Miss Battle's eyes danced, and Miss Bostock's eyes counted up and pounced; black Rosy's eyes watered and ran over. But Jethry Numbers' eyes ranged in a dependable and dignified line to other times and other lands. And what he said counted. It came, thought Penny, from not speaking up at every drop of the hat.

"I cal'late," said Jethry one day, "that you might help with the lanterns, youngster. You crawl inside and hand 'em out."

He unlocked the door of the little red house. Penny climbed in. He found himself in a jeweled cave. There they were, stacks and stacks, each ready to be aflame. He picked them up one at a time and handed them out to Jethry on the ground. Then they sat and trimmed wicks, Penny helping with this also, and they talked. Every imaginable subject. In the dusk with the sky glow fading up and the ruby light about them growing brighter and brighter as each lamp was trimmed and made ready, there grew up between them a beautiful bond, and Penny knew at last what it was. Friendship. Warm and cozy and crowding around his little empty heart. A friend for Penny. He could hardly believe it.

Mostly they talked of engines. Jethry had driven the Thunder Chariot once. Now he was only the lan-

tern man. But his heart was with the iron monster.

"Engines! You get a lot from living with 'em, youngster, and learning from 'em how much you know and how much you don't. They ain't nobody can ever say he knows engines so's to tell exactly what they'll do or not do. To the very end they got the drop on us. Inside they stay wild and savage and untamed. You think you got 'em under control, and all the time they're laughing at you. A slip of the hand and they can kill."

"Kill men?"

"Yes, youngster. Man makes 'em but he never knows at what hour of construction the living spirit goes into the cold iron and dominates it and him. But ever afterwards he's the servant. Got to coax and beg and handle with tact. Still, you'll find 'em rare good company, pretty straight acting and on the square. They ain't got the little meanness that people have. They can keep their mouths shut and they never tell lies. They work on and on, uncomplaining until they die of heart strain."

"Where do dead engines go? Surely not through the hole to hell." The old man shifted and dodged the question. There were veils you didn't tear away from the eyes of childhood. "Where does anything go, son?"

"And some day these will be dead?" They looked immortal.

"Aye, some day." He set his oil can down with an emphatic thump and his voice rose defensively. "What does it matter where the iron husk goes when they've put their souls in everlasting roadbeds?"

Penny was struck with this thought.

"Once there was a king, son, and he was so constrained to last forever and be preserved properlike that all his days he kept wise men figuring on it and working men working at it, so's he could be fixed up permanent and defeat death. At last the big thing come off and the old king died, and they put him away like he'd instructed 'em and the world forgot him.

"Well, and there was another king and he built a beautiful road. He figured it was the noblest thing a man could build. It was wide and white and it made his heart come up in his throat to look at it, and it run up the mountains and over the valleys and along by the seas. And he died on the job without ever giving thought to himself or where he was headed, just so's the road got down, you see. Two thousand years later some diggers dug into a tomb and took out a po' ugly old mummy, and they worked a long time among ancient documents trying to find out who it could be. But the road held the living soul of this other king, and it had been a part of every age that passed under the sun, and the king who built it could never die. You see what I mean?"

He was little but he saw. It made that music inside him. Some day he would put his soul upon a living road. . . .

And they came to speak of other things. Intimate things.

"Ain't you got no folks, son?"

Penny hugged his little black ribbed knees and looked far away. He wondered if he might tell this friend about them. "I dunno. No, course I haven't. But I've thought, or maybe I just dreamed it, a little

fambly." His voice held them tenderly. "I can see 'em as plain as anything. Have you got any folks, Jethry?"

Jethry's head bent lower over the lanterns.

"No, not now, son. Nobody now."

And they bore this together.

Presently Penny motioned to the sleeping gods—beautiful, mysterious, silent.

"Breathing."

"Yes."

"How can a feller learn engines, Jethry?"

"Best way is, grow up with 'em. Even then you never know all."

How could Penny manage to grow up with the engines? He had already lost considerable time. He was six.

Whenever Miss Battle caught him climbing through the fence he got a good strapping. So he paid a price for all his high-hung happiness. But it was worth it.

Lombardi, the president of the construction company, came often in a big gray car to confer with the foreman. They stumbled one day over Penny. But Penny didn't know. Penny was driving the Thunder Chariot, very seriously, his soul in his eyes. Backing with it, turning, coming grandly on again. Toot-toot—h-o-n-k—chug-chug.

The rich man was amused, then touched. The little gray, limp clothes and the face above them that didn't, somehow, match. He was working very hard and in four inches of mud.

"Where's he from?"

"Orphanage there."

Lombardi eyed it, shook his head slowly. His glance went back to the small, intense figure guiding the monster wheel.

The foreman said, "He's there every day; he's helped build the road. A queer, silent little fellow. The old lady whales him for it regularly, too. I think it's the mud that makes her so mad."

"And it doesn't stop him?"

"Nothing stops him."

Lombardi walked over and spoke to Penny. But Penny, on being brought back to himself, was shy and hung his head. He couldn't talk to these as he could to Jethry Numbers.

The next day the rich man brought Penny a pair of boots to back and wheel in. "Put them on when you come out and she'll not be bothered with the mud."

Penny took the boots in a daze. He had no words. The first real treasures of his childhood. He got into them. He could drive much better now. Toot-toot—h-o-n-k—chug-chug.

But when Lombardi came again he found Penny turning and chugging in the little blunt-toed, mud-caked shoes.

"But where are your boots?"

It was a painful subject. "Well, I gived 'em away. I gived 'em to Hennery. He's a cripple and can't walk." He was anxious that the kind man should understand. "And—and you see how he needed 'em more than me."

"But if he can't walk . . ."

"Yes, sir, that was why."

There was a child's serious logic here, but Lombardi saw it was too deep for him. He stood for several minutes looking down into Penny's quaint, earnest face, and his little sad shoes, all mud. He'd get a whaling for it. Yet he couldn't help giving away the boots that would have saved him, and he couldn't help coming out . . .

He turned away with a sudden, sharp ache in his heart and tried to forget the child.

Penny made the rounds regularly with Jethry now. To him it was the first step in "growing up with the engines." Perhaps you began at the lanterns and ended there, as himself and Jethry. He thought it a cheerful, ruby way to quit off when old.

When they had finished one night Jethry said, "Sit down, son. I got a big idee."

"Whut?"

"Well, now, you're an orphan, ain't you?"

"Um-huh."

"And folks adopt 'em, what, out of the home?"

Penny nodded.

"Well, then!" triumphantly, "don't you see daylight, youngster? Don't you begin to smell no rat? What's the matter with me adopting you?"

Such words produced no immediate picture in Penny's mind. They were too impossible and he had to wait until a new picture was coined. "You mean—would I leave this house?"

"That you would, youngster! You'd come along home with Jethry. I've got a nice little shack—two rooms." Proudly. "She's right cozy."

"But—you want me?" It seemed incredible. It

was the great reward that every orphan hoped to win—something achieved along an impossibly straight and narrow path, as going to heaven.

Old Jethry said gently, "I cal'late I got to have you, youngster. You and me—they ain't no question—we belongs."

An enormous something blocked Penny's whole chest. He mustn't cry. Jethry wouldn't want a cry baby, unfit to handle whoffing gods.

"And I'd help take care of the lights regular?"

"Ever' night. You can be a great help to old Jethry."

"And grow up with the engines?"

"Right with."

Penny hugged his knees, the glory of his future rolling over him in great, translucent clouds of color.

The old man said, "Keep it a secret, son. I got to save up and buy you a little bed. And kivvers. Don't you let out a squeak to no one. I don't trust that Battle woman not to make a runkus about every blessed thing. Some women is that kind. You ain't too little to be finding out about women, and if they're the runkus kind can't nothing ever be done about it. Best beat a w-i-d-e path around 'em. She's one. So we'll wait until everything is ready and then spring it sudden like. That's the safest way with her sort."

What did the strappings matter? Or Miss Battle's shrill tirades? Or the lessons, so hard to shove into one's head [though engines went right in]; or the three-times-a-day syrup-and-grits. Penny's future was secure. His work lay with the whoffing gods. Immense, staggering! And not an orphan knew. How Miss Battle, who thought him quite dull, would splut-

ter and gasp to see him high and splendid upon his iron throne and miles and miles of white road glittering wherever he passed over.

Every night Jethry reported how he was getting on with the saving. Near the end of the week Jethry took to chuckling.

"What you laughing at, Jethry?"

"You'll know. Like little cats?"

"Yes, why?"

"You'll know. Like country smoked sausage and hot buckwheats?"

"Whew—it's awful to think about 'em. Why?"

"You'll know."

. . . . . .

There was a stir at the orphanage. Penny could feel in the air the brewing of extraordinary things. First Miss Battle stuck her head in the door and looked at him. It was not a scathing look, but a look of awe. Then Miss Bostick stuck her head in with the same. Then black Rosy. Respect was in all three of these glances, and blank astonishment as if they saw Penny for the first time. It made him feel queer. He pinched his arm. He called the roll for himself. Penny! Present.

Rosy threw her apron over head and wailed. Now Penny was on. Rosy always did this when some one was leaving. He had the feeling that her crying wasn't very deep. She could go into and out of it too easily.

She stood him in a towel and took away the clothes he had on and his other set. Rosy could work wonders with starch and soap and hot irons. She could flute

ruffles and pull out tucks and stiffen even gray things. She could make the worst orphans look something grand. Later this orphan would wilt back into his usual looks, but on occasions it had lasted long enough to get several adopted.

Now Rosy was back with his clothes stiff and fluty. She scrubbed him till the top layer was all off. She wet his hair and tried to plaster it. Penny kept his eyes enormously guileless as if he hadn't an idea what was coming off.

Miss Battle, all aflutter, came in and had a hand at trying to plaster down his tan, blunt hair which nothing, not even Miss Battle, could plaster. As she whacked at him with a rough brush (mostly hitting his eye and his ears) she sort of didoed and smirked.

"Now, try to look bright, Penny. Sometimes, you know, you're very dull appearing and nobody can seem to make you hear. Please brighten up when you're sent for and tell the gentleman what a fine home you've had and how Miss Battle has been a perfect mother. Hear?"

They sent for him to come to the parlor. The parlor was that terrible place known among the children as the choosing room. Its dark magnificence was locked against intruders except when ladies came choosing. The children were sent for, and before the strange, deciding eyes of the ladies and Miss Battle's warning ones one must parade and stand and be, somehow, brave.

Miss Battle's eyes could do two things at one time. They could crinkle lovingly before the ladies while they never ceased putting across their grim warning to

the children. Penny had entered this room but once before and nothing came of it. Mostly they wanted girls, and curly golden heads, not blunt tan ones like Penny's.

Penny went down the stair and in at the choosing room door. Miss Battle put out a skinny caressing hand and drew him to her. Her voice had a theatrical catch in it. "I shall miss Penny, O so much. He's the very brightest of the children, and his going will make a difference here."

It wasn't Jethry Numbers.

The sympathetic face of Mr. Lombardi wavered and blurred in Penny's startled gaze. Penny must tell them. He remembered promising Jethry not to speak of it, but surely his promise wasn't meant to hold in such a dreadful exigency as this. And while he was swallowing and struggling to speak, arrangements for his adoption were going along over his plastered hair.

Rosy interrupted. Some one to see Miss Battle. She excused herself and fluttered out, wearing dainty, mincing steps.

Now was the time. It would be easier to tell Mr. Lombardi alone. He was a kind appearing man and he had brought the boots. Perhaps he'd know a way to help Penny. But just as Penny was sidling up to him he heard a voice he knew.

Penny forgot all else. He ran into the hall. Glory. Jethry . . . good old Jethry, just in time to save him.

Miss Battle was speaking rapidly and in her most irritable voice and gradually closing the door all the time. "I tell you it is too late. Other arrangements have been made. . . . But the child has no say-so.

Absolutely none. He has already been adopted by wealthy people who will give him every advantage. Yes, it-has-already-been-arranged."

Jethry's old coat was brushed and his shoes shined, and the three unmatching buttons were polished until Penny could see three unmatching faces of himself down the front of Jethry.

"Well, for sure, M'am. Yes, for sure—"

And Penny must stand helpless there and watch the sun going down on that friendly face. And then Jethry had turned and walked away without looking back. . . . And something bright and soaring sweeping along out of life with him . . . and the door shut on a little boy's transcendent future. . . .

. . . . . .

It was very wonderful in the big house. Wherever you looked there was so much splendor that it held you in a dream of wonder and awe. He had been seeing the outside of houses all his life and hadn't known they were like this inside.

Every one was good to him. He had a room all his own. And there were little clothes and toys and books, and he had a nurse. (A nurse for Penny, who had done his own buttons since he was two. He was glad John Emory and Rockwood couldn't know.)

In one particular the house was like Miss Battle's. Everything went off by clock strokes. His meals came up to the nursery. Afternoon, dressed very splendidly (but somehow the clothes made no change in his face or his blunt hair), he went with his nurse into the beautiful gardens to play. Here it was like fairy land, and

for an hour he raced and romped and forgot himself.

At tea time his new mamma floated up to the nursery . . . exquisite, softly fragrant, all lace and little fascinating shoes, and charming inflections in her voice, and a sort of gay amusement when she talked with you. She petted him in a light and quickly passing mood. He knew he didn't matter at all with her one way or the other.

Penny's new father came up every night. Penny thought he was lonely.

"Are you happy, Penny?"

"O yes, sir."

And was there anything Penny wanted? O no, sir, he had so very much now . . . only he did wish sometimes that he could give Hennery and John Emory back at the orphanage some of his things. . . . His new papa told him, kindly, to forget about the orphanage. He was a rich boy now, he would grow up to be a rich man.

Then he went away and the nurse put Penny to bed.

Here was the hour he dreaded. Here the dark void that pressed upon him with a heaviness almost beyond endurance. The things that he could keep locked up during the day burst their doors now. The life he had so nearly had . . . and lost. The years stretched before him, dull and lifeless. A rich man. All the bright chances gone.

And he thought most of all of Jethry . . . and his saddened shoulders . . . going away out of the gate.

Great sobs shook Penny. For a time he could smother them up in the pillows, but they grew bigger and bigger. The nurse came and tried to quiet him.

Mr. Lombardi came. He sat by Penny's bed and talked. In his awful grief and loneliness Penny held the hand of his new papa. And sometimes, while they sat thus, kind sleep bore him away, erasing for a time his unbearable memories.

But the next night it was just as bad. And the next and the next. They tried to get him to say why he grieved but he would not. At last they had a doctor in. He came again and again. He shook his head.

"There are some children you can transplant and some you can't. The child is breaking his heart over something. I'm afraid he won't change. It's the quiet, inarticulate kind that take things hardest."

Penny did his six year old best. During the day he was extra polite and grateful, and he smiled whenever anyone looked at him to show how happy he was, and he tried to push himself down into the house and the room and the garden and become a part. But at night his grief had its way with him. He grew thin and wasted.

In the end there was nothing to do but to send Penny back.

. . . . . .

At Miss Battle's there are degrees of disgrace ranging from not keeping your place in line and spilling milk to bringing in mud. But the master disgrace of all, the one monstrous, unforgivable sin by which one lost face forever in this world and the next, was to get adopted and not make good. It reflected, Miss Battle thought, on herself, and no child guilty of this offense was ever allowed to forget it.

The great Lombardi car pulled up in front of the

home. Penny descended and walked in, a marked man. A sent-backer.

Miss Battle's words were few and to the point. "I'll see you in the office."

He was sent to bed supperless and lay in the dark sobbing. And then, through his misery, a sweet content stole. Jethry! The whoffing gods! And he had come home to them.

He wiped his nose on his sleeve and sat up quickly. A smooth stretch of completed highway ran beneath his window, ribbon white in the night. They were gone. All of them—the lanterns, the softly breathing engines, Jethry. He had ruined his chances of adoption because of them and now they had gone on without him.

Miss Battle made Penny do twice one child's chores. Whatever went wrong he got the blame. She held him up before the others daily as the Horrible Example. He was a wicked, wicked boy and didn't they all know where wicked boys went?

It would be a relief, he decided, to go along there and get it over. No matter what the discomforts of the place, it would hold advantages over Miss Battle's. But even that escape was cut off. Though he searched diligently he couldn't find the hole to hell. It had been covered over by paving guaranteed to last a thousand years.

He knew now why kids ran away and he began planning. He would watch his chance and go. Somewhere out in the world, who knew, he might run on Jethry or find some one who would carry word to this friend for him.

Rosy took a bunch of the children to the dentist.

They came back late on a car packed with homegoing crowds. Rosy was excited and frightened with the responsibility of shoving so many children into no space at all.

"Now, Buster, hold on to Jim, and Jim, catch ahold Sammie, and Sammie, get by that rod and hook your arm over. Don't grab at the gentleman's leg, Penny."

The car seemed ceilinged with newspapers. When it stopped everybody fell against everybody and all said, "Excuse me."

Once, while the car was letting off passengers, Penny, through a vista of legs, saw, far down the shadowed distance, the glow of ruby lights.

A fat woman with a basket was working her way out past him. Penny found himself on the ground with her, and the car moving on. He didn't quite remember getting here. But the ruby lights had signalled him and something inside and bigger than he was had answered.

He could no longer see them and he couldn't recall if they had been this way or that. There. No, that was the tail light of an automobile. He began walking and then, topping a rise in the street, he gave a shout and began to run. Blocks and blocks away, but O, there was no mistaking! He knew the lanterns of Jethry, and the way their bright hearts shone up into the dusk.

There they were, all of his mighty whoffing gods, occupying a solid block of street. Their tired heads were lowered in slumber and the lanterns made a walled in spot of splendor for them, and no one dared to pass this way.

He called, "Jethry! Jethry!"

It was too late. Jethry had finished his work and gone home.

Penny sat down. All about him night shut in. Windows that had been silent and unnoticeable in the day spoke out now with golden voices. They told him things about homes that he could almost grasp but not quite, having no experience to draw on. Though he had lived in two houses, neither had said what these windows seemed to say.

It grew very cold. He put his hands against a red lamp and its warmth was too good to be true. But people could see him here and they would take him back. He hid away under the body of an iron friend and presently their somber slumber wove its spell over him.

He felt Miss Battle's hand on his shoulder and tried to shake off a stiff feeling dream. It was gray dawn and he sat up. Jethry Numbers bent anxiously over him.

"Penny—is it you? Is it you, Penny?"

"Yes. I comed back."

The old man's face was working strangely and he could hardly get his words out. "You ran off from the rich man's house and found your way here?"

"He sent me away."

"He sent . . . WHY?"

"Well, I kept thinking of you, Jethry, and I couldn't happy-up."

"There—there—thinking of old Jethry, was you? There—there—"

They sat with their arms about each other, rocking to and fro, blinking in the gray dawn.

"You stay alongside of me today, son, and as soon as my work's over we'll go have it out with that woman. We ain't skeert of her. We'll march right up to old hatchetface. You be the toot-toot and I'll be the thunderer. We'll walk in this way": He squared off. Penny squared off. Whoffing gods.

Miss Battle arched her neck and squinted her eyes. "I doubt if the committee will consider you a suitable person to adopt a child. However-no-one-will-ever-want-him-now. After the Lombardis tell how he behaved there. And certainly we can't keep him on here forever. He is a bad example to the children. A-boy-who-had-such-a-grand-chance." Her old grievance rose afresh and she talked faster and faster. "You might-take-him-along-and-I'll-do-all-I-can togetthecommittee toapprove."

Jethry rose grandly. "Come along, son."

The two walked out of Miss Battle's Home for the Homeless. As they went through the hall they passed the sad row of little gray orphans, watching with wistful eyes. Penny wanted, O so much, to tell them to be of good cheer. In the end things come out all right. Just see at this! But he was too wicked to be allowed to speak with them.

Outside. "Whoopie!"

"Whoopie!"

Old Jethry cut a pigeon wing on the sidewalk. They both roared. They went through the streets like two drunken men, staggering along on collapsible knees.

"Well—here's home, youngster."

Jethry threw a log on the fire. The fire applauded with a thousand golden sparks. He lighted his lamp.

"Is this your little gray cat, Jethry?"

"Your cat."

His cat purred against Penny, and loved him with his long endearing tail.

"There's your bed."

Penny went to inspect. Little sheets, warm blankets, a small pillow. All ready and turned down these three months. He touched it with gentle, unbelievable fingers.

They sat to supper, man and man.

"Have country sausage and hot buckwheats. Have coffee."

Gosh!

When the dishes were done, "There's a book for you, youngster, while I read the paper. It's about engines."

Penny and the book sat in a big chair. Strange how familiar the room felt. The things that were borned on the inside of him matched the things in this room; the fire and the cozy enfolding walls. A home. He believed his little fambly must have sat in such a room with books, and a cat, and a great content. . . . Yes, he knew now what it was the yellow windows had said to him.

QUESTIONS

Where did Penny live? What were the whoffing gods and how did they happen to be near at hand?

Why did Miss Battle give the children castor oil on the occasion mentioned?

Describe the way a man's voice sounded to Penny.

What did Jethry say about engines? Look up anthropomorphism.

Tell Jethry's story of the two kings.

Why did Mr. Lombardi give boots to Penny and why did Penny give them to Hennery?

Why did Jethry not adopt Penny as soon as he thought of the plan?

What do you think of Miss Battle?

Were you surprised when you found Mr. Lombardi, instead of Jethry, in the choosing-room? Tell the rest of the incident.

Why did Mr. Lombardi have to send Penny back to the Home?

How did Penny escape?

Describe Penny's home with Jethry.

Write a story about Penny at the age of twelve, or write a story about him when he drove his first Thunderer.

Tell the class what you would best like to do and how you would do it.

STORIES ABOUT YOUNGER CHILDREN

Stephen Morehouse Avery, "Never in This World" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1928, Doubleday).

Mariel Brady, *Genevieve Gertrude* (collection, D. Appleton & Co.).

Howard Brubaker, *Ranny* (collection, Harper & Bros.). This volume is out of print but most of the stories may be found in *Harper's Magazine;* for example, "Ranny Discovers America," September, 1914; "The Intemperate Zone," December, 1915; "The Power of the Press," December, 1914; "Boy Finance," June, 1916.

Stephen Crane, "The Fight" (*Whilomville Stories,* Harper & Bros. Or see Crane's *Collected Works,* Alfred A. Knopf).

Mary W. Freeman, "The Copy-Cat," "The Cock of the Walk" (*The Copy-Cat,* Harper & Bros.).

O. Henry, "The Ransom of Red Chief" (*Whirligigs,* Doubleday).

Aldous Huxley, "Young Archimedes" (Title story, Geo. H. Doran Co.).

Margaret W. Jackson, "One Round Trip Ticket" (*Woman's Home Companion,* June, 1929).

Rudyard Kipling, "Wee Willie Winkie," "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep" (*Under the Deodars,* Doubleday).

Edison Marshall, "The Heart of Little Shikara" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1921, Doubleday).

Elinore Cowan Stone, *The Laughingest Lady* (collection, D. Appleton & Co.).

See also the Suggestions for Reading, page 148.

THE SWAN SONG OF CICERO

BY

HARRY IRVING SHUMWAY

Harry Irving Shumway

Born in 1883, at Naugatuck, Connecticut, Harry Irving Shumway was educated in the Boston Public Schools. He also studied art at the Art Students' League, New York City, literature at Boston University, and the drama at Harvard. During the War he applied for enlistment in Camouflage (43rd Engineers), but was not called overseas until the day the Armistice was signed. He has written many articles and short stories. For several years he was in charge of the *Youth's Companion* laboratory, and as one result of that experience wrote two textbooks, *How to Build a Ford Racing Roadster,* and *How to Build a House for Ourselves.* "The Swan Song of Cicero" is taken from *The Wonderful Voyages of Captain Pen,* a collection of stories that originally appeared in the *Youth's Companion.*

THE SWAN SONG OF CICERO [1]

"THIS," remarked Duck Travis, opening a window wide, "would be a great day for a swim. It's so hot I feel like a pancake on a hot griddle."

The other members of the Hammer and Chisel Club nodded weakly. Captain Pen plied a palm-leaf fan idly and by his looks seemed to agree with them.

"It would be a great life to be a fish, I guess," offered Skeet Somerville. "Yes, sir, and swim around all the time in nice cool water."

Captain Pen smiled, but not, apparently, in agreement. "I dunno," he considered. "You can get too much of such a thing. I've been on the sea, in it, and several times under it—and once or twice I figured I'd had a leetle too much of it."

This statement seemed to have something behind it, and the boys, well trained to scent a possible narrative in the most simple remark, sat up and took immediate notice. But apparently there was no need for anybody to do any hinting. The Captain picked up his usual bit of soft pine, opened an enormous knife and started to whittle. This meant the recital was about to begin.

Thinkin' about a superfluity of water (began Captain Pen) always reminds me of Mr. Judson Tutweller.

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[1] *The Youth's Companion,* July, 1929; and *The Wonderful Voyages of Captain Pen,* Little, Brown & Co. *Copyright,* by Little, Brown & Co. Reprinted by permission of author and publishers.

It was years ago I met him, while I was mate on the four-master the *Crescent Moon* and on a voyage up Baffin Bay way. He wasn't a member of the crew, but a passenger for his health or somethin'.

This Mr. Tutweller was an odd stick, not so much in his looks, but in his ways and conversation. I noticed he had fits of starin' off to sea and heavin' sighs now and again, as if he was powerful lonesome or had somethin' on his mind.

We struck up an acquaintance in a queer way. There was a dog aboard, Pete, an Airedale, and he was a great favorite with all hands. One day I was leanin' on the railin', watchin' a school of porpoises, explainin' about 'em to this Mr. Tutweller, when Pete came up and licked my hand, cavortin' about as dogs will. He turned to Mr. Tutweller and stuck a paw out at him.

"Go away, dog!" cried the man, in a queer voice. "I want nothing of you whatever. Go away!"

"What's wrong with Peter?" I asked. "Don't you like dogs?"

He shook his head. "I never can look at that breed of dog without—without— Well, a dog like that wrecked my life. Yes, you see before you a man bowed down with grief—at least inside. If you like, I'll tell you about it."

This looked like a story, so I nodded.

"The name Tutweller may mean nothing to you, I suppose, because you are of the sea. But if you were a citizen of any of the cities of America, you would have heard of it without a doubt. Yes, sir, Tutweller's Flea Circus was known from one end of the country to the other, wherever refined and artistic vaudeville was

to be seen. It was the greatest of its kind—instructive, marvelous, breath-taking. And the real heart of it was—was Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton."

"Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton?" I asked, as he hesitated. "Your partners?"

He shook his head. "No. Fleas! And what fleas! Why, my dear sir, those fleas knew more than any dumb creatures I've ever seen. Marvelous intellects! I'd had dozens of fleas, of course, all right in their way. But Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton were super-fleas. They brought down the house wherever we showed.

"Well, one day we were playing at the Orpheum in Brooklyn. On the same bill was Bogle's Collegiate Airedales—a troupe of dogs that played instruments in a canine orchestra. I'll make this story short, because I can't bear to dwell on it. Bogle was working in a new dog and having some trouble with him, owing to the dog's wildness. One night I had my little circus ready to go on, and this wild Airedale broke his leash and came bounding through. He overturned the gold and velvet table on which were Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton. There was a mad scramble, the table fell on the dog, and when we got things straightened out the dog bounded away. Nobody ever saw him again. But here's the tragedy of it. Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton must have jumped on him in their fright—because I never saw them again either. Vanished just like that. Of course I hired detectives, but they could do nothing; said it was out of their line.

"I retired. Had a sort of collapse, in fact, because I felt more than a professional interest in my fleas. They were dear friends. I loved them."

He waved a hand at the ocean. "So my doctor advised me to take a sea voyage. The owner of this ship is a cousin of mine, so that's why I'm here. Now you've heard my story, and you know why I don't like dogs any more."

"That's too bad," I told him. "But why don't you train somethin' else. More fleas—or anything?"

"No heart in it," he sighed. "There was only one Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton. Perhaps, later. One never knows."

I saw a lot of Mr. Tutweller as time went on. He took a shine to me, I guess. He'd run on about Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton—how cute they were, and so on. Golly, I got so I almost knew 'em.

Then Fate took a hand in the proceedin's one night, ordainin' that I was to know Mr. Tutweller even better. The old *Crescent Moon* was an unlucky ship—should have been called Friday the Thirteenth or some such name. We had leaks; storms battered us until every plank creaked and groaned; some of us got sick. It was an awful cruise.

It ended up by the *Crescent Moon* eclipsin' herself on a ledge in the middle of the darkest night I ever saw. I don't remember exactly what happened. There was an awful crash, the ship seemed to split in two, and then there was a reg'lar bedlam gettin' to the boats. For some reason I never did find out I found myself in a boat with Mr. Tutweller, and Pete; just the three of us. It was so dark and things were so wild I didn't know where the others were, and I had an awful time keepin' that little craft out of the trough and right side up.

All night we rowed and bailed. When daylight came there wasn't a trace of the *Crescent Moon* or any of her crew. But the picture wasn't quite empty. Land, quite a lot of it, lay to the southwest, and you can bet we started for it. The sea had calmed down a lot.

As we neared it we saw that it was an island, and I spotted a harbor round a point of land.

"That looks like a spot made to order," I said. "Good deep water— Great Jumpin' Tadpoles! There's a little sloop anchored near shore!"

I tell you that was heartenin'—especially to Mr. Tutweller, who was expectin' nothin' less than head-hunters or cannibals. We pulled round to the neat little sloop; and it was no derelict—showed signs of havin' been used recently. The name *Hap Hazard* was painted on the stern.

"There's a hut," shouted Mr. Tutweller, pointin' through a clump of trees. "And smoke is comin' out of the chimney!"

"Here's where we make an early mornin' call," I said.

And we hopped out of our boat, beached it, and went up to the hut. Maybe Pete wasn't tickled to get out on land. He jumped around and acted crazy, even ignorin' the cold looks Mr. Tutweller gave him. We'd been seen, because a man came out of the hut, shoutin' and wavin' at us.

He was a tall, middle-aged man, with grayish-black hair and deep, burnin' eyes. Might have been an orator or a medicine man with a circus, I thought. But he wasn't, we found out later. He was a poet!

"Welcome," he smiled. "Both to you and the dog.

I gather by your boat and costumes that you must have been in a wreck."

I admitted that, and introduced Mr. Tutweller and Pete. The man, who said his name was Martindale Clem, was delighted with Pete. And Pete seemed to return the likin'.

"The sole regret of my exile," said Mr. Clem. "I forgot to bring a dog with me. Well, come in the shack, and I'll give you breakfast. And you, too, Pete."

That was a grand breakfast, fillin' and hot. The man had provisions in that shack enough to last him if he lived to be as old as Methuselah. Well, we applauded the fine breakfast in a most hearty manner, leavin' nothin' at all for the gulls. As we made it disappear, Mr. Clem talked about himself. Seemed he had an awful yearnin' to be off by himself on a lonely island where he could write his poetry and not be molested by people and noise. He'd left a place he called Greenwich Village, in New York City, and sailed away one day. Yes, sir, left the "madding crowd," as he called it; left it flat to be a hermit and live to suit himself.

Well, then he started readin' us some of his poetry. Free verse, he called it. He liked to read. There didn't seem to be much sense to it—nothin' up and comin', like "Jim Bludso" or "The Wreck of the Hesperus." But we were company, so we had to applaud. Which we did every time he finished a poem.

A fine time we had for several days, listenin' to his poetry and swappin' yarns. Mr. Clem was a fine host, and he took a great shine to Pete.

But Mr. Tutweller and I had no desire to be hermits, not bein' poets, or hermits either, and we said as much.

"You are doomed to stay here for some time, I fear," answered Mr. Clem. "No ships come anywhere near here. And that little boat of yours wouldn't get you far. You are several hundred miles from any civilized spot."

He thought awhile and then slapped his leg.

"I'll sell you the *Hap Hazard,*" he finally said. "Sell it at a very attractive figure. I will—if you will give me Pete. He means far more to me than any boat. I'm sick of sailing anyway. You may have the *Hap Hazard* for three hundred dollars. It cost me six hundred."

It was a bargain. Mr. Tutweller had plenty of money, and we was happy to get it at any price. So, to make a long story short, the next day we said good-by to Mr. Clem and Pete and sailed away in the *Hap Hazard.*

We sailed at a smart rate all that day and lay to durin' the night. And the next mornin' the weather was just as fine, and we were soon reelin' off the miles in jig time.

About noon on the second day Mr. Tutweller let out a yell and began pointin' at somethin' ahead.

"There's a fountain! Look! A fountain in the ocean!"

I looked where he pointed. "Shades of Soapine!" I gasped. "That's no fountain. It's a whale—and he's blowin'!"

"Look! He's turned and is comin' at us," said Mr. Tutweller. "Let's speak to him. I never pass a dumb

creature without speakin' to it—except Airedales."

"We'll keep away from him," I warned him. "One swish of that feller's tail and our little boat would be kindlin'!"

The whale dived and then came up, archin' himself and generally actin' like I never saw any whale act before. He was an enormous critter; the biggest I ever saw. Suddenly he put on steam and made a circle around us. Mr. Tutweller was tickled over the critter's tricks.

"You wouldn't believe it," he laughed. "But there's something about him that reminds me a lot of Mr. Wimbleton. Of course a flea and a whale aren't so much alike in size—but just the same there's a sort of *élan* about him that reminds me of dear old Wimby. By George, I'm going to play to him on the jew's-harp. That always *got* Mr. Wimbleton!"

So Mr. Tutweller pulled a jew's-harp out of his pocket and began buzzin' on it. Well, that whale just stiffened out in the water. You might think a whale couldn't cock his head on one side and listen, but this one did. And then I almost fell out of the boat when the big critter began beatin' time with his tail!

"See—buzzzzz," said Mr. Tutweller, almost swallowin' his jew's-harp. "I've got him! He—buzzzzzz—adores it! Just like—buzzzzzz—Mr. Wimbleton did!"

By the looks he did—and also by the looks Mr. Tutweller had no idea of the danger. A light thirty-footer wouldn't stand a show with the wild antics of a hundred-foot whale; and maybe he was a hundred and fifty! The critter was plumb fascinated by that pesky

jew's-harp, and he kept edgin' nearer and nearer to us. It made me awful uneasy, and I scanned the sea for hope.

Well, by Bingo, luck was with us. There was a wee bit of land, not five miles away, which I hadn't noticed before, because we'd been sort of lazin' away up to the time the whale showed up. I set a course for it, you can bet. Away we flew towards it, the whale followin' easily. No matter what I did, I couldn't keep the little boat away from the antics of that crazy whale. He'd dive under us and around us and dart across our bows—and every gesture he made my heart jumped a foot. Suddenly he disappeared. I wondered what new trick he was up to.

Then I felt an awful rise—a fierce heave into the air! Up we shot—boat, Mr. Tutweller and I—high in the air. Then down came the *Hap Hazard,* and up came the whale. I guess it must have maddened him, because he gave our little sloop a whack—and that was the end of it. His great tail knocked it into splinters.

Well, there we were in the ocean again. I took in the situation. The little island now lay about a quarter of a mile away. I struck out for it.

"Where are you?" I yelled, to Mr. Tutweller. "Can you swim?"

A voice from the other side of the whale, which was movin' out of the way, said: "Yes! But don't let him get away!"

How was that for a silly order! Don't let him get away!

Well, we made the land all right. Drippin' wet and

all in, we sat down to dry off and to see what had happened to the whale. He floated awhile off shore about a hundred yards and then he turned and started splashin'.

"Look! He's up to somethin'. He's comin' in fast," said Tut, after awhile.

I looked out to sea through a small telescope that had been in my pants pocket. Sure enough. The big critter was headin' straight for us, all steam up. And what a churnin' he was makin'! We hurried down to the water's edge.

Up he come, and luckily the water was very deep. He stopped dead short with one powerful swish of his tail, and the water boiled all around, like a tidal wave.

"See!" shouted Mr. Tutweller. "He's scared a lot of fishes up on the beach!"

Almost at our feet was a gorgeous collection of fish, so scared they'd jumped clear out of the water and beached themselves. Mr. Tutweller and I gathered up three cod, two huge swordfish and half a dozen pollock.

"Much obliged!" shouted Mr. Tutweller to the whale.

The big critter just looked silly at him, blinkin' his eyes.

"I know what he wants," said Mr. Tutweller. "Music. You cook these fish, and I'll thank him while you're doin' it."

So I cooked the fish in the hot embers of the fire, and Mr. Tutweller regaled the whale with a few tunes on the jew's-harp.

That was as fine a dinner as I ever remember. Mr.

Tutweller and I ate it all. And the whale lay to about a hundred yards off shore.

"Pen," said Mr. Tutweller, "Pen, I'm goin' to train that whale. I swore I'd never train another animal—since Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton went. But this whale seems to me like nothing but an overgrown flea! Playful and cute, just like they were. We'll begin at once. And we'll call him—ah, let me see. What will we call him? I have it! Cicero!"

All day and every day, Mr. Tutweller worked on that whale, and I will say he made progress. Either he was a grand trainer or else Cicero was crazy about him, and a super-smart whale. I'd sit on the beach and watch their stunts.

Then one day Mr. Tutweller came to me with a great idea; at least he thought it was great. "Pen," he said. "There is no doubt but what Cicero should be made to carry us about. He's powerful and fast. In fact, I've put the raft on his back several times, and he's taken to it kindly. Can't you rig up some kind of a body, or car, or somethin'?"

"How about a contraption like an elephant's howdah? Cicero is kind of a sea elephant."

"Just the thing! And put in some gadgets to steer him by, rods or something. I'll leave the mechanics to you."

So I set to work, and in a few days I'd built a sort of deck house, or whale house. It would hold the two of us. I put in a steerin' wheel, hooked up with some right and left gadgets that went down and rested on Cicero's back.

Of course we had to have a harness to keep it secure

on his back. I found some very tough grass and set to work weavin' a heavy rope from it. In a week my harness was made.

Cicero stood as quiet as a lamb while we arranged the little house on him. All the time Mr. Tutweller was croonin' his whale-talk at him.

Then he turned to me. "All aboard! You can be skipper, and I'll be an interpreter, see! Cicero knows everything I say to him."

So we took our places, me at the helm of the strangest craft I ever piloted. I had a whistle hangin' from a cord around my neck, and this we thought would be a good thing to signal with. So I gave a blast on it.

"Half speed ahead!" I called.

"Allez-oop, Cicero!" called Mr. Tutweller. "Hep! Hep!"

Away went Cicero, as smooth as the finest steamer —and as powerful. I bore down on the port side to dodge a ledge, and Cicero got the idea right away, after a few taps with a stick in Mr. Tutweller's hands. With a little practicing Mr. Tutweller got him so he knew port from starboard, and when he was to go ahead and when astern.

"Full speed ahead!" I ordered.

"Hi! Hi! Hi!" yelled Mr. Tutweller. "Go it, Cicero!"

And away went Cicero like mad. How that whale could go! And as even and smooth, in spite of the fact that the sea was choppy! We sailed—or whaled —around for an hour or more, then headed back for our beach again. We docked as neat as you please.

"I guess that shows something!" Mr. Tutweller said proudly. "The alpha and omega of training—from fleas to whales!"

"You've done a fine job," I said.

Mr. Tutweller was a man of one idea, when he got goin'. He spent all his time fixin' up his whale, teachin' him new tricks and didoes. The only trick I wanted him to do was to get us out of that desolate spot. If he could carry us about those waters, I didn't see why he couldn't take us back to the United States.

While Mr. Tutweller was busy on the trainin', I built some things. One was a rope ladder by which we could climb up Cicero to the deck house.

One funny thing I noticed as the days went by was the absence of other whales. They go in schools nearly always. Cicero seemed to be off by himself and contented with the society of men. I mentioned it to Mr. Tutweller.

"I'd thought of it," he said. "And I've also thought it would be a jolly idea to find him a companion."

"It would be a funny thing if this whale had never seen another whale," I said. "He might be a foundlin' whale, left some place. It's funny, his bein' off here alone. We're pretty far south for whales, you know."

"Maybe," said Mr. Tutweller. "But—"

What he was going to say I never knew. Bang! Both of us fell out of our seats and fetched up at the front of the deck house. Cicero had stopped as if he'd struck a brick wall. In fact, I don't believe you could find a brick wall that would have stopped him anywhere near as sudden. And without any signals, either. I didn't know whether to call it mutiny or

engine trouble. Dazed, we scrambled up and looked around. We were standin' still, in clear water. And Cicero was shakin' all over, in the grip of some powerful emotion. And when a whale shakes, an earthquake is nothin' to it.

"Wh-wh-what's the m-m-matter with him?" asked Mr. Tutweller, tryin' to talk in spite of Cicero's vibrations.

"I know!" I said, my own conversation rattlin' so my teeth chattered. "L-l-look! Some more wh-wh-whales!"

That was what ailed Cicero, without a doubt. A whole school of whales were cavortin' in the sea not half a mile away. I felt in a flash that my guess had been right. Cicero was indeed a lone whale. He'd never seen another like himself, and the shock was affectin' him.

I blew on my whistle, and trainin' and discipline proved stronger than Cicero's fear. Off he started in the direction of the other whales.

But things were different. His easy ridin' qualities had left him. The sea was calm, but he'd developed something like a twenty-degree roll, and he was pitchin', too, into the bargain.

"That's funny," said Mr. Tutweller.

It got worse. Soon Mr. Tutweller began to look green and worried.

"Pen," he says, "I'm going to be seasick. You'll have to take sole charge. Carry on."

He slumped down, moanin'. I had my hands full tryin' to act as navigator *and* chief engineer at the same time. I chanced to look over the side.

"I'd 'a' sworn," I said, "that Cicero had more freeboard than that. He's low in the water."

And I'd no sooner started wonderin' what to do, when Mr. Tutweller let out a yell.

"There's water in the cockpit! He's sprung a leak! Man the pumps."

I looked down. Sure enough, water was starting to slosh about. And I never saw water rise so fast. I'd no sooner looked than it was up to my knees and goin' higher.

"He's submergin'!" I shouted. "What's the order for *that?*" Mr. Tutweller fetched a terrible groan. "I don't know. Cicero, you stop that this instant! Come up out of that water! You hear me?"

Cicero stuck one eye out of the water and leered at us. He actually leered at us!

Then Cicero submerged altogether. It was pretty bad, but I guess we could of stood it if he hadn't pulled one more trick. He rolled over on his back and started swimmin' upside down. There we were, sittin' on the ceiling of the deck house with all the gear in our laps, travelin' along at about twenty miles an hour, submerged eighteen feet under water. How long this lasted, I don't rightly know. I sort of lost track of time. Finally, Cicero righted himself and come to the surface again. We fell off the roof sudden like and landed on the deck-house floor again. Tut's whiskers were trailin' a couple of yards of assorted marine growths, and I had a friendly young perch down my back. Outside of that we wasn't damaged, except our prides. These were hurt terrible. "Get your craft under control, Captain Freedom," says Tut, very stiff

and nautical, like he was on the bridge of the *Leviathan* talkin' to the sixth officer. "I want to go home."

I had a snappy answer all framed up, but just then Cicero made another crash dive, and in the ensuin' disorder I lost track of it. This time he didn't stay down so long, but I was poked in the eye by a passing clam, who was entirely peace-lovin' and reasonable, but had happened to be goin' in the other direction. When we come up again I was good and mad.

"*My* craft," I says. "I guess fleas is about your size as an animal trainer, after all. Whales is too unwieldy."

And with that I spun the wheel down hard. But all Cicero did then was stand on his head and do a nose dive. When he finally come up he sighted the other whales again and started after them. The wheel was hard to starboard, and the engine room indicator said full astern. But it didn't do us any good. Cicero only speeded faster after the other whales.

"We're goin' straight for an island—full of rocks!" I yelled suddenly seein' land right ahead of us. Which didn't look so good, seein' we were doin' about fifty knots an hour!

"Heave to!" shouted Mr. Tutweller.

But Cicero was beyond heavin' to. His fool head was down under water, and he was streakin' it for all he was worth.

The other whales circled away, but Cicero never knew it. On he plunged.

Bang! We struck the rock-bound shore of that island like an express train, head on! The deck house

soared up into the air and came down with a crash on the rocks. We did the same.

Dazed, I sat up on a tuft of coarsy grass. Mr. Tutweller was flat on his back, studyin' astronomy at first hand. Cicero lay quiet, with his mouth open and eyes starin' glassily at nothin'. I staggered over to Mr. Tutweller. He was blinkin' his eyes—and countin' somethin' in the air.

I had an awful time bringing' him to his senses. But, finally, he sat up, rubbin' his head and groanin'.

"I remember it all now," he said. "Cicero was going with his head down—and never looked where he was going. Poor old Cicero. Is he dead?"

I went down to look at him. I listened at his mouth, and I detected sounds.

"His engine's just barely turnin' over—but he's mighty feeble," I said. "Guess he's beached himself."

We looked around. "Low tide," said Mr. Tutweller. "We'll wait for high tide and maybe we can get him off. We must hurry with this deck house before he goes crazy again."

Frantically we worked on the deck house, and we succeeded in gettin' it on tight an hour before high tide.

Cicero was showin' signs of life. His eyes were more expressive, and he'd shut his mouth. Mr. Tutweller walked right up to him and shook his fist in his face.

"This will be a great lesson to you, Cicero!" he barked. "I'm ashamed of you. Now look me in the eye. Are you goin' to take us back and act like a good boy? Are you?"

Cicero feebly wagged his tail. He was a sorry-lookin' whale.

"He's learned his lesson," said Mr. Tutweller.

And apparently he had. We made our little harbor in about two hours, and a better ride I never had—outside of being soakin' wet and banged up.

We left Cicero out in the bay and rowed in on my raft. Mr. Tutweller had one black eye and his mouth was bruised. He was a pretty soggy-lookin' citizen.

The next mornin' there wasn't a sight of Cicero anywhere. All day we waited and scanned the sea, but he didn't show up. And we had a feelin' that he wouldn't.

We pretty near starved on that island. If I hadn't salted down a lot of surplus fish that Cicero rushed up on the beach in our palmy days, we would have. But, while Mr. Tutweller had been trainin' Cicero, I'd salted down several hundredweight of fish. Got the salt by boilin' down the salt water.

We stayed there about three months, until one day a ship chanced that way. They saw our distress signals and sent a boat to take us off.

"Yes, sir," said Captain Pen, putting down his chunk of soft pine. "That was a queer adventure. I've often wondered what would have happened if we could have trained a herd of whales and organized a rodeo. It might have proved a great novelty.

"The last I heard of Mr. Tutweller, he'd gone back to the fleas. He'd trained another troupe of 'em.

"I read later that the new circus was a great success.

Which all goes to show a man shouldn't step out of his line. If you're born for fleas, stick to 'em and let whales and such alone. Well, good-night, boys. Now you can skin down to the creek and have that swim you've been talkin' about."

QUESTIONS

Who tells the story of Cicero? Where and when had he known Judson Tutweller?

Who was Pete, and why did Tutweller not like him?

Compare the episode about Mr. and Mrs. Wimbleton and the Airedale with Don Marquis's The Flea, the Pup, and the Millennium (in the volume, *When the Turtles Sing*, Doubleday).

Where, in reading about Cicero, do you first smile or laugh? Why?

What happened to the *Crescent Moon?*

Describe Martindale Clem. Why did he sell the *Hap Hazard?*

How was the *Hap Hazard* wrecked? What happened when the whale followed the men to shore?

Why is Cicero a funny name for a whale? What is the name of the whale in Don Marquis's story, "O'Meara, the 'Mayflower' —and Mrs. MacLirr"? (In the volume mentioned above, or *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories*, 1928, Doubleday). Write a story about a meeting between Cicero and the whale in Don Marquis's extravaganza.

How was Mr. Tutweller fitted to train a whale?

When did Cicero show signs of emotion? What happened when he submerged?

Give an account of what followed his coming to the surface.

When did Cicero show signs of repentance? What finally became of him? What became of Don Marquis's whale?

Who rescued the two men?

The whale, the goat, and the elephant are frequently used in humorous stories. Do you think of other animals about which funny stories are written? Try to write one, yourself, about the animal best adapted for your own ability in story-telling.

READING LIST

The first two chapters of the "Book of Jonah" (*Old Testament*).

Rudyard Kipling, "A Matter of Fact" (*Many Inventions*, Doubleday).

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick; or The White Whale* (*Everyman's Library*, E. P. Dutton & Co.).

Samuel Scoville, "The Sea King" (*Ladies' Home Journal*, January, 1923).

A STUDENT OF LANGUAGES

BY

ELSIE SINGMASTER

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Mrs. Harold Lewars, better known as Elsie Singmaster, was born at Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania, August 29, 1879. She holds the degree of A.B. from Radcliffe (1907) and that of Litt.D. from Pennsylvania College (1916). Her first published work, "When Sarah Saved the Day," was published 1909. She is the author of many volumes that reveal her interest in history, such as the *Book of the United States, A Boy at Gettysburg,* and the *Life of Martin Luther.* Preëminent for her tales of Pennsylvania life, and the so-called Pennsylvania "Dutch," she has appeared in many magazines and in anthologies of contemporary short stories.

A STUDENT OF LANGUAGES[1]

MRS. WAGONSELLER, waking early, heard Victoria above her head. The tapping of her heels was regular, unremitting, masterful. Victoria was a masterful young woman.

Having blinked her eyes open Mrs. Wagonseller turned them upon her sleeping husband. His name was James but before her marriage she had been too shy to address him familiarly and afterward she called him "Mister," and then when he had a right to the title, "Pop." His round head was an almost perfect sphere against the white pillow and his hands folded and laid under his cheek gave him the look of a cherub. His wife would have made no such comparison, however; to her he was a man of personal distinction, profound wisdom and wide learning.

He yawned and threw his short arms above his head. At this instant the clock struck five.

"It is early," he said. "Something must 'a' waked me."

"It is Victoria," explained Mrs. Wagonseller pronouncing the *V* carefully. "She is already at it. Just listen once!"

"Like a steam hammer," he remarked grinning. "What has got into her at this hour?"

Mrs. Wagonseller sat up. At the same instant there

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[1] *Woman's Home Companion,* October, 1927. *Copyright,* Elsie Singmaster. Reprinted by permission of the author.

was a snapping sound which came apparently from outside the window.

"She is shaking her sheets in the air," said Mrs. Wagonseller. "That means she will make her bed right away. Now she's pounding her pillow." Mrs. Wagonseller stepped from bed. "Something is up, Pop."

"She knows her lessons all right," said Wagonseller.

But he too sat up, glancing humorously at his pleasant wife. He knew what worried her; she was always anticipating the day when Victoria would marry and leave them and lately her fear had been sharpened by the elopement of a young neighbor. It was true that so far as they knew Victoria was unsought and she was only seventeen, but no one had dreamed that Alice Aughinbaugh had a lover and she was only sixteen. It was not because Victoria was unattractive that she lacked attention; it was because she held herself too high.

Wagonseller rose and began to dress. In his heart he too feared for Victoria. He had wished to be a preacher but he had not been able to afford an education and he dreamed of Victoria becoming a distinguished scholar. Thanks to his increasing urging and assistance and to Victoria's own ambition and ability she had never stood elsewhere than at the head of her class.

"*Ach,* it isn't anything serious," he assured his wife. "She is now quiet; it is just a little extra work. Perhaps she forgot something. Mom, have no fear."

At six-thirty Victoria came down to the kitchen. The sun's rays fell upon a half-bushel basket of freshly gathered tomatoes on the table. Breakfast was ready, substantial ham and eggs and molasses cake for Mr. and

Mrs. Wagonseller, toast and coffee for Victoria. Mrs. Wagonseller mourned every day because Victoria ate so little but Victoria's red cheeks and her hundred and forty pounds distributed over five feet four inches of height made starvation seem remote.

"Well," said Victoria cheerfully, looking at the tomatoes, "what's up?"

"I will today make catsup," explained Mrs. Wagonseller. "It is a long work." She spoke not in the least complainingly but with pleasure in the prospect. Nor did she imply a desire for Victoria's help.

Victoria set the coffee pot on the table, transferred the fried potatoes from the pan to a hot dish and filled the glasses; then she walked to the door and called toward the garden, "Pop. Breakfast." When Wagonseller entered she sat at the table eating her toast with delicate precision. All the Wagonsellers had good manners but Victoria's were of a later generation than her father's and mother's.

"Pop," announced Victoria briskly, "you must hear me a little Latin yet before I go." At school Victoria spoke correct, sometimes painfully correct English, but at home she dropped into the vernacular.

"But you knew it good last night!"

"This is tomorrow's lesson. I studied it this morning."

Mrs. Wagonseller's frightened eyes sought her husband's. Victoria never had engagements which made advance preparation necessary. Wagonseller's eyes twinkled back—did she suppose that if Victoria meant to elope she would continue to study Latin? He finished his breakfast and took up Victoria's Cæsar—this was

happiness! Sometimes while he waited for customers at the stocking counter in the store where he worked he wrote down the following words: *English, Pennsylvania German, German, Latin, French;* and in moments like that and like this his proud heart swelled almost to bursting.

In Victoria's Caesar he found written two lists of words, one Latin, one English, and he began to pronounce them distinctly.

"Ducit."

"Third person singular, present tense, verb *duco,* to lead," rattled off Victoria. *"Duco, ducere, duxi, ductum."*

"Dare."

"To give," translated Victoria. "Present infinitive of *do. Do, dare, dedi, datum."*

Having finished the Latin words he pronounced the English and Victoria gave their Latin equivalents. He did not correct her; whether he was able to or not, she seemed to need no correcting. She took her book and read two sections first in Latin, then twice in English, once in a literal and then in a free translation. There was no scamping for Victoria.

"Now who were the Sequani?" asked Mr. Wagonseller proudly. "And who was Dumnorix? And how many were in a legion?"

"It is one thing I hope," said Mrs. Wagonseller from her place at the sink, "and this is it, that Victoria will not have to read any more stories like last year, about boiling fathers in hot oil and poisoning people and tearing them up."

"Pelias, you mean?" said Wagonseller smiling con-

descendingly. "Those are different times from ours, Mom, and it was one of those sort of goddesses that done it."

"I haven't any use for those goddesses either," said Mrs. Wagonseller. "And the words were so hard."

"Do you mean Symplegades and Eumenides and Agamemnon and Clytemnestra?" asked Wagonseller. His pronunciation was perfect and the airiness with which he said the words indescribable. "Anything else, Victoria?"

"I have yet a few French verbs, such irregular ones."

Victoria handed her father a third list and took out pencil and pad. Wagonseller had often heard that French was easier than Latin and that to one who knew Latin French offered no difficulties, but he had not found this to be the case. These words he spelled.

"*B-o-u-i-l-l-e-r,*" said he.

Victoria wrote rapidly.

"*V-o-i-r,*" said Wagonseller.

Victoria dashed off the parts of "*voir.*" There were ten verbs in all. When she had finished she compared her writing with the grammar.

"More yet?" asked Wagonseller.

"No," said Victoria. "I have everything else."

She fetched her hat from the hall and took her books under her arm.

"It is surely a nice day," she said happily. Then, unconscious of their curiosity, she ended their suspense. "There is a lecture this evening on the Value of Science to Mankind. That is why I learned my lessons this morning."

"We will not have so much dinner today as some-

times," announced Mrs. Wagonseller. "But this evening I will cook *schnitz und knep.* I will feel by that time for something hearty."

Wagonseller went to the store and Mrs. Wagonseller began to scald and peel potatoes. She was very happy —who would not be with a good husband and a bright daughter and sufficient income and plenty to do?

But such bliss is almost sure to be a precursor of trouble and at dinner Mrs. Wagonseller's castle crashed to earth. As she sat at table her cheeks were flushed, her eyes shone and there was a smile on her cheerful face—until Victoria spoke. Victoria had finished her dinner and was folding her napkin.

"Mom," said she, "we will have company for supper."

"Why, who?" asked Mrs. Wagonseller astonished.

"A teacher from the high school," said Victoria.

"Then I will not bottle my catsup till tomorrow," said Mrs. Wagonseller, not in the least disturbed but on the contrary very much pleased. "I will make a good supper."

"No," said Victoria blushing a little. "That isn't the idea. You have what you said. This teacher has never eaten *schnitz und knep;* that is the reason I fixed it for this evening. We will have *schnitz und knep* and good pie and preserves and cake and coffee. If you have too much besides you cannot enjoy *schnitz und knep.*"

"*Ach,* Victoria!" This time Mrs. Wagonseller's *v* was a *w.*

"The teacher is coming especially for *schnitz und knep,* Mom," answered Victoria firmly. "Afterwards I go along to the lecture." Rising and putting on her

hat she continued to talk: "Remember, Mom! To those who have never eaten *schnitz und knep* it is a wonderful thing. And I will be home to set the table and fix flowers."

"All right," said Mrs. Wagonseller somewhat ruefully. "But sometime we have this teacher for a right meal."

Her father saw Victoria blush. He was brighter than his wife and his brow had clouded as hers had cleared.

"And what is this teacher's name?" he asked.

"Mather," said Victoria as she went through the door. "M-a-t-h-e-r."

"Ach!" said Mrs. Wagonseller when she was out of hearing. "This is no way. I have a mind to fry chicken."

Wagonseller went toward a table in the corner of the room and taking up yesterday's newspaper turned to an inner page and pointed to a brief personal. His wife read it over his shoulder.

Mr. Charles Mather, teacher of mathematics in the high school, has returned from a visit to his home in New England.

"Not a man!" gasped Mrs. Wagonseller. "Is this teacher then a man?"

"We will see how much of a man he is," said Wagonseller grimly. "I was afraid something was up when I heard her this morning." His wife was too unhappy to remind him that it was she who had scented trouble in advance; besides she was not that kind of person.

According to his custom Wagonseller tried to meet the situation with humor.

"Have I then all my great learning for nothing?" But his voice shook.

"Victoria was always so quick," said Mrs. Wagonseller. "It is no telling what she might do. It cannot be that she would bring him here married! That is what Alice did to her Mom and Pop."

"Now don't be foolish," answered Mr. Wagonseller. But he did not speak with any heartiness.

"A teacher!" said Mrs. Wagonseller.

"You wouldn't expect Victoria to take anyone lower than that," said Wagonseller.

Wagonseller entered the kitchen at quarter past five o'clock. In four hours he had had ample time to see his home despoiled of its pride. No more would he sit watching Victoria add to her learning by the dining-room lamp, no more would he leave his companions at the barber shop with the excuse that he must hear his daughter's lessons, adding casually and invariably that Victoria always stood first. She might even go elsewhere to live or her husband, especially a New Englander named Mather, might consider her parents beneath him. Wagonseller had had a very unhappy afternoon.

The kitchen was in perfect order except for the few utensils needed in preparing supper. Beyond in the dining-room the table had been set with a stiff outstanding starched cloth, the best china and a bowl of asters. The house was deliciously scented with cloves and allspice which had gone into the catsup.

Wagonseller looked round uneasily, then he called "Mom!" and his wife appeared from the dining-room.

She wore a blue and white striped gingham dress and a large stiff white apron.

"Were you then listening to them?" asked Wagonseller trying to be gay.

Mrs. Wagonseller turned tearful eyes upon him.

"He is a big good-looking young man," she said. "Victoria said I must come in. I think he looks already down on me. But they are sitting on chairs yet and not on the sofa."

"I should hope so!" protested Wagonseller. He tiptoed up the back stairs to change his suit.

"You don't know how far this has gone." Mrs. Wagonseller called after him in a mournful whisper.

Having completed his change of raiment and brushed his brown hair with a wet brush Wagonseller descended the steps. He felt the same embarrassment as his wife but he was too proud to show it. Mrs. Wagonseller had not ceased to cry and her nose was growing red.

"You must brace up," said Wagonseller sternly.

"But he is such a learned one!"

"Well, the preacher is learned and you are not afraid of him, are you?"

"I'm afraid of my manners," wept Mrs. Wagonseller. "I never thought I would have to have such a one in the family. If I could only stay in the kitchen."

"That you can't do," said Wagonseller firmly. "You won't need to talk; let Victoria do the talking. She brought him here. And I will help along too." For the first time in Victoria's life her father thought of her with irritation. "I'm now going in."

Passing through the narrow hall toward the parlor Wagonseller heard no sound and remembered with a

sinking heart the rapturous silences of his courtship. It might be that already they had reached the point where speech was unnecessary.

Victoria rose when her father entered, not from the young man's side but from a chair across the room. Her cheeks were a little brighter than usual and her motions a little jerky.

"This is Mr. Mather," she said. "Mr. Mather, this is my father." Yesterday Victoria would have said, "Meet my father"; but last evening in an advertisement of a book of etiquette on the back of a magazine she had read that this was an abominable form of introduction. Victoria needed but one hint.

It seemed at first as though the young man did not intend to rise. When finally he made up his mind, he did not get quite to his feet before Wagonseller was directly in front of him holding out his hand.

"I'm pleased to meet you." Wagonseller began in a loud cordial tone but his voice dropped toward the end of the sentence. This was, as Mrs. Wagonseller had said, a very big and good-looking young man and he did seem to look down.

"It is a very nice day," Wagonseller continued pleasantly.

"I thought it hot," said Mr. Mather.

A short response like this was not according to Wagonseller's rule for polite conversation and he backed away.

"I will help Mom a little," he said as he went through the door. "It will soon be everything ready."

In the hall Wagonseller slipped his finger inside his tight collar as though to move it away from his neck.

His face was red with shame; he knew that he had not made a good impression.

Then Mrs. Wagonseller announced supper. She had bathed her eyes in cold water and she stood in the doorway and said "Supper, Victoria," in a fairly steady voice; then she went to her place at the table. The preacher always pulled out her chair for her and she was uncomfortable throughout the meal—would this young man shove her halfway under or leave her too far away?

The young man did neither; he walked to the place indicated to him and sat down and opened his napkin and fixed his eyes upon the covered dish before Mr. Wagonseller.

"I hear this is a wonderful concoction," said he in a deep voice.

Mr. Wagonseller smiled and then unaware of the astonishment of his guest he bowed his head and prayed. At the head of his table with so much good food before him to dispense he lost his uneasiness. *Schnitz und knep* was as Mr. Mather said a wonderful concoction. Made of dumplings boiled with pork and dried sweet apples and cooked in Mrs. Wagonseller's fashion it was a delicious and substantial viand. Wagonseller helped the guest and then Victoria and then his wife and as the aroma reached him it sent a reviving impulse through his brain.

"It has often wondered me what those old Romans ate," he remarked pleasantly.

The menu of the old Romans was apparently of less interest to the guest than the menu of the modern Wagonsellers. Mrs. Wagonseller had not finished

pouring the coffee, Victoria obedient to the laws of good behavior was still sitting with her hands clasped lightly in her lap as though the food before her were nonexistent, Wagonseller was just beginning to help himself—not too generously the first time, he remembered; but the young man had already begun to eat. He was really a very fine-looking young man but his good looks seemed eclipsed as he bent over his plate.

"Those old Sequani for instance," continued Mr. Wagonseller after a pause. "And old Cæsar and old Dumnorix—what did they eat now? For every day and for a feast?"

The young man made no answer.

"They had grain and meat like we have," said Victoria making no motion toward beginning her supper. With despair her mother saw her bright color and remembered her own lack of appetite when Wagonseller had taken his first meal at her father's house. "They made bread and cakes and we hear about their roasting meats and of course they had wine." She looked intently at Mr. Mather but his eyes were on his plate.

"Now Mrs., she don't like to hear of those old times," said Wagonseller pleasantly. "She don't like to hear about how Pelias was boiled and killed or how the other chap had the same treatment and come out a young man."

"I never heard of them," said Mather.

Victoria was astonished.

"What Latin did you study?"

"Never studied Latin," said Mr. Mather with his mouth full of dumpling. "Math's my specialty. Went to technical school where they had no use for that stuff."

"Well, well," said Wagonseller. "I thought you all had to study Latin." He refilled Mr. Mather's plate for the second time. What could one talk about? "You studied history of course and you know about old Cæsar?"

"I know about old George Washington and his cherry tree," answered the young man laughing at his own wit. "That was enough history for me." He began to talk in his deep voice and continued until he had finished his *schnitz und knep* and until Victoria had removed the main dish and brought on three kinds of pie, a cherry pie, an apple pie and a delectable raisin pie. At sight of them the young man's eyes glittered, but before they were offered to him he had said a good deal. He had a really beautiful voice and his pronunciation was excellent. It was his voice and his broad *a's* and his elided *r's* which had captivated Victoria.

"We had a gump of a history teacher, an old maid with false hair. She was a perfect fool for history and we wouldn't learn to spite her. She used to say to me, 'Now, Charlie,' in a tone like that. Once she cried. No use anybody teaching unless they can slam the kids round. She had to stop. Now math I liked and I had a teacher I could respect—he used to swear at us like the dickens. The rest I didn't care for, taught a lot of rot. In the Latin room—ye gods!" Suddenly the young man looked at the cloth beside his plate. "I have a fork here for this pie but no knife."

It is astonishing how large a little room may suddenly become when the silence of a great amazement spreads over it. Wagonseller flushed a little and Mrs. Wagonseller bent her head. To eat pie with a fork was

according to Victoria the conspicuous and essential hallmark of good manners. Their hearts ached for Victoria. Then her father almost groaned. Victoria did not mind! She rose with the pleasantest face in the world and went to the sideboard drawer. Moreover Victoria told a lie!

"It's my fault," said she gayly. "I set the table. I forgot your knife."

Then Victoria began to talk. She had eaten almost no *schnitz und knep* and now she did not touch her pie. She talked about everything and nothing, about the weather, about the tricks played in school, speaking rapidly as her father and mother had never heard her speak. She urged more pie on Mr. Mather and he consented to have a second piece of each variety. When he finished he took his watch from his pocket and looked at it and rose.

"Come on, Victoria," said he. "We got to beat it." Then he glanced round. "Got any toothpicks?" he asked.

For this too Victoria fell—thus Wagonseller phrased it in the slang which he heard daily. His color was now as red as Victoria's. The phrase was exact—it was a fall for Victoria. A toothpick belonged, according to her creed, with a toothbrush and a nail file and a washcloth, in one's bedroom or bathroom. But Victoria opened the sideboard drawer. Back in a corner was a forgotten and long out-lived receptacle and this Victoria brought forth and offered. She opened the door into the hall and the young man preceded her through it. He said, "Good-by," for both him and Victoria.

Still at his place at the table Mr. Wagonseller sat motionless. The door was shut tight and the voices came faintly to his ears. Victoria was speaking in her positive tones; her voice sounded gay. Wagonseller put his elbows on the table and cradled his head in his hands. He heard a door close with a slam and then there was silence. Mrs. Wagonseller came and stood beside him and put her hand on his shoulder.

"*Ach,* don't take it so hard, Pop! Perhaps he isn't such a bad fellow."

Wagonseller shook his head. He heard Victoria's voice which had been music to his ears; he saw her capable and strong body which had been the delight of his eyes. He seemed to hear her quick step on the stairs and so real was his delusion that he lifted his head. To his astonishment the door opened and there stood Victoria, not dressed for the street but with a book under her arm.

"Aren't you going then?" gasped Mrs. Wagonseller.

"No," said Victoria with flaming cheeks. "I certainly am not going with him anywhere. It is all right to give such a person a meal but there it stops."

"Did you have to hurt his feelings?" asked Mrs. Wagonseller.

"No," said Victoria. "He hasn't any. But I told him I had work to do; I made up my mind that I at least would show I had manners."

"Have you work to do?" asked Mrs. Wagonseller. Now that Victoria had begun, was she going to keep on lying?

"Yes, I have. Father, listen once."

Wagonseller lifted his head. Above his clasped hands which hid his mouth his eyes glittered.

"Well?" he said.

"I have a plan," said Victoria. "There is a Greek class starting in the high school and I'm going to get into it. I can easily do that along with my other studies. They say it is more interesting than Latin."

"And what am I to do?" asked Wagonseller trying to look grave.

"Well, I thought if you could just learn the letters you could help me. Here is the alphabet."

Wagonseller bent his head over the page. At sight of the strange characters he was both terrified and inexpressibly proud.

"Then I could get into college without an examination," continued Victoria. "You can do it, Pop."

Wagonseller's head bent still lower. There was a college in the town—it would mean years more of Victoria. He lifted his head and blinked at her, his face sober, almost blank. It was the way he looked when he was about to say a good thing.

"All right," he said pretending a weary patience. "I have already five languages, but I never thought I'd have to learn Greek yet."

He saw a long list: *English, Pennsylvania German, German, Latin, French, Greek.*

Were there, Mr. Wagonseller wondered with ambitious hunger, any more?

QUESTIONS

Do "Mister" and "Pop" reveal anything to you concerning locality?

What is indicated by "pronouncing the *V* carefully"?

What characteristic of Victoria is the first to be dramatized? How?

Describe Victoria. What languages did she know or study? How was her father connected with her studies?

Who or what were *Symplegades, Eumenides, Agamemnon,* and *Clytemnestra?*

Why did Victoria's father spell the French words?

What is *schnitz und knep?*

When and why did Mrs. Wagonseller's *V* become a *W*?

What did the parents fear when they learned that the teacher of mathematics was a man?

What had Victoria learned from a magazine cover?

What is the first suggestion of Mather's bad manners? Name the others in order.

When was Victoria astonished at her guest? When did she show her contempt for him?

Do you like all the Wagonsellers? Why?

Write a page or two showing Mr. Wagonseller reciting the Greek alphabet to Victoria. Or, write an episode of the day following Mather's visit, at the stocking counter or on the way home. Or, tell how Mr. Wagonseller behaved when he met the mathematics teacher in the street.

STORIES OF STUDENTS AND OF SCHOOL LIFE

HAROLD W. BRECHT, "Two Heroes" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1925, Doubleday).

HOWARD BRUBAKER, "The Professor Looks at Barbara" (*Scribner's Magazine,* October, 1929).

EDWARD HOPE, "Immoral Victory" (*Pictorial Review,* October, 1927).

ALDOUS HUXLEY, "Young Archimedes" (Volume title, Geo. H. Doran Co.).

RUDYARD KIPLING, *Stalky and Co.* (Doubleday); "Regulus" (*A Diversity of Creatures,* Doubleday).

O. F. LEWIS, "Old Peter Takes an Afternoon Off" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1922, Doubleday).

J. P. MARQUAND, "Mr. Goof" (*Saturday Evening Post,* May 4, 1929).

Barry Pain, "The Boy and the Pessimist," "The Curate," "The Boy, and the Bee" (*Stories Without Tears,* Stokes).

Elsie Singmaster, "A Friend" (*Saturday Evening Post,* October 13, 1928).

Booth Tarkington, "Pageant of the Table Round" (*Penrod,* Doubleday); "Cornelia's Mountain" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1925, Doubleday).

Fiswoode Tarleton, "Meddlesome" (*Bloody Ground,* Dial Press).

See also previous lists.

THE SHERIFF'S EDUCATED SON

BY

RAYMOND S. SPEARS

Raymond S. Spears

Born in Bellevue, Ohio, August 2, 1876, Raymond S. Spears was educated in public schools and early became a newspaper man. He was on the *New York Sun* from 1896 to 1900. Searching for materials for *Forest and Stream,* he walked from Utica, New York, to Virginia, and traveled down the Tennessee River in a skiff throughout the winter of 1901-1902. From a later skiff journey he made down the Mississippi River resulted a number of short stories, including "A River Combine—Professional," reprinted in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1924. He has explored Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes, traveled on a motorcycle through the Bad Lands of Dakota, and toured other regions of America by motor-car. He has been connected with Adirondack field work and the Forest Department of New York. He has a post on the staffs of *Adventure* and of *Hunter-Trader-Trapper.* Mr. Spears has published many short stories and a number of books on camping, hiking, woodcraft, and guncraft. His life has been one that Boy Scouts and their adventure-loving elders might envy.

THE SHERIFF'S EDUCATED SON[1]

SHERIFF BYRON KEEFE of Plato County was large of frame, competent and domineering. He had been elected to put an end to lawlessness from Mica Waters to Hard Hack Range and across the Broken Lands Basin. His success had been marked, though not quite complete. Organized beef stealing, range wars and outlaw bands had departed, but here and there a skulker slipped into sporadic opportunities for mischief and only a good man could have kept the peace as well as Keefe had done.

Keefe had one son, Browning, who spent most of his youth going to school and college and recovering from the effects of colds, fevers and skin troubles. At twenty-two the boy was tall, thin, rather pale. He was educated mentally, broken physically and shy of heart. Keefe put him at work on the sheriff office books, time and mileage-keeping for the deputies, recording the disposition of department .30-30 carbines, checking up meals for prisoners and looking after all the accounts. Browning worked at desk and typewriter day after day, nominally a deputy sheriff but actually a kind of office odd-jobber. None of the hard, husky riders presently hesitated to tell him to clean rifles brought in dirty, or to run over to the café

[1] *Everybody's Magazine*, November, 1927. *Copyright*, Raymond S. Spears. Reprinted by permission of the author.

and bring a piece of pie with coffee for the tired heroes of a long ride.

Down stairs in the court house was a long cellar. Here were stored various things belonging to the county, and here in some long forgotten day the board of supervisors had outfitted a shooting gallery along the west wall. A target was at one end, a counter at the other end, and the earth, a long 'dobe wall partition, with other mufflings made the gallery silent under gunfire. For years no one ever used the gallery. Some of the deputies didn't know it existed. Only one of the officials considered it, Browning Keefe.

The youth had gone out to practice over on the creek bottoms when the sheriff and his deputies went on an official county picnic. The nerve-wrack of years in school and its side-line ailments left Browning's hands trembling so that he missed every shot with a county .45 revolver, and he excited laughter, creating a tradition, when he tried to work a county carbine, not knowing how to throw the lever below the last click, to lift a shell into the chamber. His fellow deputies cut a large, leather medal out of an old boot leg, and pinned it on the office deputy's coat lapel—The Booby Tag.

Browning Keefe had learned one important thing in his previous life—to think through to the end. Presently he went down into the court house basement, wiped the dust off the gallery electric globes and cleaned away the débris. No one paid any attention to what he was doing. He took pains not to arouse any curiosity about his activities. He sent away East to a revolver factory, famous for the fine machine

work on its productions and bought a 26-ounce .22 caliber rim fire revolver. He sent to other revolver makers whose specialty is weapons which will stand all kinds of abuse—and still be ready for business when the time comes that one gets down to it. He bought 5,000 rounds of .22 caliber long rifle ammunition for his revolvers, and every morning, before he sat down at his desk, he shot ten shots from each revolver, alternating them in his hands. Every noon, he fired twenty more shots, and every afternoon, at the end of the day, he shot five shots from each revolver—a box of fifty shells every day. He aimed every shot the best he could to hit.

The .22 caliber long rifle shells made less sound than booted footsteps on a floor, even in the gallery. No report's reverberation ever passed the closed door of the gallery. There wasn't another person in the county who knew that the sheriff's son was shooting more than five times as many shots every day as any other man in the county. Three months after he began to shoot, when he had only 500 shells left of his first 5,000, Browning Keefe received 10,000 more, and kept right on shooting, with steady, methodical persistence. He had learned in school the value of practice.

When he had shot his 10,000th shot, and he had not missed the black of the two-inch bull's-eye at seventy-five feet in the gallery under the court house in six hundred shots he belted on the standard .45 Colt which the county issued to deputies, and making sure no one else was in the building, he wore it down stairs after the day's work was done.

The last time he had fired it was out at the department picnic when he hadn't been able to hit a mark three feet square at sixty feet. He reflected with some bitterness, that there had not been one working day when one of his smart fellow deputies did not come over to where he was sitting at his desk and make some wise remark about the deputy sheriff who couldn't hit the size of the fattest man in the whole county with the weapons of his business. He had not once made a tart reply. His own father thought he was afraid to resent the insults. The word had gone around town that Browning Keefe was soft.

Now in shooting the .22s, he had made it a point to draw and fire each shot with each revolver for five shots each day, one after the other. The last ones of the afternoon. They were six-shot revolvers, but he preferred the decimal system of keeping track of his shooting, for a box held 50 shots.

The big .45 Colt, Frontier Model, was in its holster at his hip, an open, fast-draw standard Cheyenne sheath. He had kept the holster oiled, slick. He had cleaned and oiled the revolver every week, regularly. It was with its 6-inch barrel, nearly forty ounces in weight, fourteen ounces heavier than the light weapons with which he had been so steadily practicing. But he knew the weapon's feel, from often handling and cleaning it. He stood with his hands up, palms forward ears high, facing the target, and the weapon at his hip.

When he snatched it, his palm audibly slapped the grip—the shot, as the muzzle cleared the holster, just scratched the top of the rather high counter in front

of him and hit the target plumb-center. He had made one of the prettiest draws ever thrown in the county. He fired next and in the same second, perhaps, from the elbow and the third aimed from the eye level. Then he worked the big .45 with his left hand, and when he had shot the twelve times he had decided on he stood leaning with his hands on the shelf staring at the target twenty-five yards distant, blinking. He was the best shot at a target in Plato County—and he knew it. His draw was smooth, fast, graceful.

Thereafter he continued his .22 caliber shots at the target. He slipped away on Sundays, riding out of sight of town, over into rough country, his three revolvers hidden from view till he was away yonder and all alone. He took there the natural targets from lobes of prickly-pear or spots of color against pale backgrounds, shooting at all angles and up to a hundred yards.

There were rattlesnakes aplenty over around one small mesa. He ranged there and snapped his .22s when he spied one of the running brooks of horror, so that as he rode on horseback he could dot the arrowpoint heads between their eyes. He could clip away the rattles with one shot of the .45-six-gun, and then cut the head off the other end. Aiming, he found, did not help him in accuracy. He did better work pointing than when he took the extra time for pains. By that fact he realized he was a natural gunman. He proved it over and over again flipping his guns right or left on jack-rabbits as they stretched clear above bush or through openings in the rocks, his practiced, instinctive firing driving the projectiles into what he

looked at, though his hands were thirty inches out of line from his eyes.

His hands no longer trembled, but none of the men who taunted him noticed that. His skin was a pale tan, instead of a sickly tawny, though no one observed it. Around town in Plato Court, everybody saw just what they were accustomed to expect. They were seeing a memory and not the actuality, though none knew it. Browning Keefe did nothing to break their illusion. His father paid almost no attention to him, rather disgustedly throwing him the accounts, bills, data to be filed, or otherwise attended to. The youth gave no sign of his feelings, now. He was no longer exclusively the product of educational institutions.

The book-deputy, the others called him. Just to carry on the idea, he sent away and bought books on gun practicing and the science of criminal procedures. He stood them across the back of his long, wide, flat-top desk and presently when there were a score of these volumes, the undersheriff, Rink Kluck, a tall, red-haired, freckled-face fellow with an enormous nose, huge, flexible hands and the manners of a range heifer at a screw-worm dipping, happened to notice the row of titles at which he squinted, blinking and spelling out the hard words.

"*Keys to Crookdom,*" he read whispering, "*The Female offender, History of Small Arms, Use Book of the Forest Reserves, Six Years with the Texas Rangers, Life of Captain Bill MacDonald, The Cowboy Detective, Vigilante Days and Ways, Hell on The Border—*"

"Hi-i!" Kluck shouted. "Learnin' how t' be a dep'ty sher'f from liter-chewer, eh? Hi-i! That's bright,

that is! That's the dad-blamdest idee I ever hear'n tell of— Hi-i!"

He whooped and invited all to hear, and while he yapped and yawed, Browning Keefe's gray eyes did not once leave their stare at his superior officer's greenish-grayish pupils and iris.

"By gosh, here we've got the only 'riginal—uh—" Rink Kluck's wandering glance had come around at last and bumped into the pointed look with which the victim of his tormenting now met his jeering grin. As Kluck lost the thread of his yell, the department bookkeeper said, sharply:

"Kluck, this is my office. Here is where I 'tend to my work. I know my business as well as you do yours. You're interfering with the performance of the duty of a public official. If you haven't got anything better to do than interrupt my doing of my work, while you are loafing up and down, you'd better hand in your resignation and spend your own time, instead of the people's as you are doing now."

It was for a fact Browning Keefe's office. It was interfering with public work. Some of the listeners realized that the deputy-bookkeeper was telling the truth. The undersheriff was one of the best thief trailers, peace officers and most reliable men in the county —but Browning Keefe had steered him right plumb into a stone wall that stopped him short, stunned and helpless.

As they backed away, he added:

"Just remember, this desk here is my private, confidential, sheriff office business. You mind your end of duty and I'll 'tend to mine!"

"Yes, sir!" Rink Kluck smacked his lips, deprecatorily.

Hours later some of the men who had been thus unceremoniously evicted gathered down at the Buffalo Gals Dance Hall bar to drink and talk it over. They wondered if the boy had been drinking, and got his Dutch and dander up thataway? Whatever it was, they were angry. Browning Keefe had insulted them. They didn't have to take insults from anyone. They decided they would go over to the court house in the morning and tell the smarty what was what, but at 7:20 o'clock in the morning, word came on the telephone line from the T—T ranch that all the cattle in the Red Flat pasture had been stampeded and more than twenty rustlers had been seen rounding them in to drive up into the Hard Hack Range.

Telephone central passed the word on to Sheriff Keefe who immediately sent Browning riding to three of the deputies' homes, where there were no telephones, while he called up all the others, to meet the exigency of fighting the number of men who were racing away with—the sheriff knew—more than two thousand five hundred head of cattle. Then he called up for special deputizing all the other good men he could think of at the moment, including City Marshal Phelps.

People went out to watch the possemen riding away as fast as they could make ready. It was nearly forty miles over to the T—T ranch, and every one had heard a lot of trouble was on over there. Indeed when Sheriff Keefe tried to get the T—T again for particulars central reported that someone had interrupted the woman who was talking, and throwing the instru-

ment down, apparently pulling the wires out by the roots, the last thing heard being a man's curse.

No time to waste! The biggest raid in years was on. The best horses, the best men raced to the rescue and the grim sheriff himself plowed along, passing his drawn-out posse as his magnificent horse outran the best of them.

Plato Court by ten o'clock was settled down. The sun was hot. The town was deserted. The county judge, the coroner, the prosecuting attorney, other lawyers, had gone on with the others, hastily adjourning the day's calendars. All the others could do was sit around in a siesta mood and wait for news.

Browning Keefe would have gone with the rest but his father said, "No, check up on special deputy appointments, and post your books. That's what you're good for—that's your business, you know so well! besides I need your horse for a real man."

Rink Kluck had protested to Sheriff Keefe about the insults visited on a first class, reliable undersheriff by the bookkeeper deputy. Good and knowing in the field work of the department, Kluck's knowledge was too little, his intelligence too limited, to realize his own whining when the boy turned the tables on him, smearing him with the joke. It takes more than a sense of humor to make good with the brawny, courageous bullies of the borders.

Just before twelve o'clock, Browning Keefe looked at his wrist watch. This had been a source of merriment and contempt—that lady's wristlet. He glanced around, saw that he could go to dinner and as he stood hesitating, a curious sensation assailed him. He re-

membered that his father had called on every good man in town. Even the city marshal and his assistant had ridden away. He weighed the news as he heard it. Where could a score of cattle rustlers come from? Where could they take two thousand or so head of cattle with any hope of profiting by it? He whistled, caught up his big county .45 Colt by the belt and hooked on another, left-hand, holster with a spare Smith & Wesson six-gun on the other side.

He hurried through the main sheriff office into the corridor of the court, snapping the lock as he went. He ran swiftly out on to the court house balcony and looked across the plaza to the main southwest corner.

Down the wide, dusty street from the timber line mountains of the west he saw coming swiftly six men on horseback. Sure enough! They came to the Plato County Bank and five of them lit running from their saddles, while the sixth rider held the bridles, his head turning as with his right hand on his out-flaring gun grip, he swept the quiet, sleeping stores which on all four sides fronted Court House Square.

Deputy Sheriff Browning Keefe had not foreseen this. He had merely looked forward to a day when all the county officials and their families and all their constituents would go out on the next annual picnic at the creek, and he would be challenged to shoot and show 'em how to miss. He had practiced shooting against that time—more than 30,000 shots with his .22s, and now some 2,000 with his big gun.

But the challenge had not come from his own fellow officials. The Black Wing Mob of holdups had slipped a thousand miles to trick the rich Plato County and

loot the one bank of two thousand ranches of its boasted, huge, ready-cash and negotiable assets—half a million, the deputy sheriff, the one official within thirty miles, by that time, had heard casually. The ruse had succeeded. It had fooled every one. The president and cashier of the bank had both gone riding, for they were right good men with rifles. Somewhere the telephone had been tapped.

After all, Browning Keefe was the old sheriff's son. The honor of the department, his father's job—the pride of the hard-bitten, rough-mannered, thoroughly competent sheriff, undersheriff, and deputies was as live and honorable in the bookkeeper as in the boss himself.

"Here goes!" Deputy Keefe exclaimed, "I've got to take the first shot!"

That was another thing. Sheriff Keefe never shot first. The evidence must be clear, the crime cinched, before he went for his gun—and he had fired men who didn't stand up to the legal code as he understood it to be. There were no less than three women, five or six ordinary men and a girl or two who saw Browning Keefe streaking it straight at the bank. They felt his urgency. They noticed his long, free hands swinging. They were all puzzled by that cavalcade of six men. Not one divined the situation till suddenly the man on horseback flung forth his gun and began to shoot. Deputy Sheriff Keefe's suspicions of a bank robbery were thus verified. He had on his badge, and he was in his shirt sleeves.

One bullet came by him, a second was passed by his own as he ran. The outside man toppled as he

dropped his revolver and sagged, with both hands pressed against his breast in the pitiful weakness of those shot through. The outlaws' horses plunged, scattering as the bandit's revolver went off again when it struck the ground.

The gunfire brought two of those inside to the door and somehow the deputy saw into the shadows and with a double shot cleared his way past this second line of crime into the ornate, marble reception room. He slithered sideways out of the light and stood sweeping the scene with his wide-angled eyes. He spied one of the raiders down the line against the *Mortgages & Notes* doorway—beat his shot with his own and then left-handed to the forehead of the bag-filler over in the cages.

Then he headed along the line for the vault. He now had five down, and the sixth he met with both hands full of the bank's cash in reserve, and a cubic foot or so of bonds in a bag.

"Up!" he ordered.

The bandit looked past Keefe and saw two prostrate men at the door, inert. He saw outside in the white glare of the street another of his comrades, a black shapelessness with a purple shadow. He turned and glared through the holes of his Hallowe'en mask.

"Sure, kid!" he nodded, lifting hands as the wheat bag of loot dropped to the floor, adding, "They said you'd be all there was left in town—they said you couldn't shoot—my God!"

Sheriff Keefe led his posse to the T—T ranch. He rode up to a scene of cattle country peace and industry.

Over to the northward was the Red Flat pasture, with the dust scufflings of feeding herds across the vast distances toward the Hard Hack. The owner of the ranch, Simon Farles, looked down the slope where for ten miles he could see coming a string of riders.

"Howdy, Sheriff!" Farles asked. "What's all the parade about?"

Keefe wiped the dust from his face, looking at the telephone wires, long-cutting southward to the railroad, first.

"Can I use your telephone?" the sheriff asked.

"Nope," the rancher shook his head. "Out of whack. Tried to get central yesterday mornin'—Nary a whisper. But *what* the hades, Keefe?"

"One of those damned cowboy jokes, Farles, and when I catch him, and the woman who helped him—u-h-h—" Then the sheriff took it out in loud, long, picturesque cursing and gesticulating.

All the rest of the day the emergency posse came stringing in. It was funny— Not too damned funny, of course; just funny. Especially the two bankers, the county judge and several leading merchants who hadn't ridden—to brag about—for some years, had their ideas about humor, true, middling and false. Farles rejoiced. He hadn't had such a herd of visitors, not since—when was it?

"An' say," he laughed, "lucky I killed a nine months heifer yesterday, not exactly beef, but too good chewing for veal—all cool, now, and ripe for a barbecue."

So they had a pit-roast, and sat around in the warm night, a heap of cedar roots and stumps flaring high, telling stories, harking back, looking forward—prod-

ding one another about this time when and that time, he must remember—things soft tongues can repeat in the wide lands in hearing of the coyotes rejoicing on the knolls out around. And the ranch slept them, later, in the sheds and under the wagons, in a tier or two along the floor in front of the fireplace inside. One banker slept under the blanket with the man who once had loaned him six bits, and the sheriff was under a blanket with a man he had tried to convict of murder—and was glad it couldn't be done.

In the morning they headed away homeward, twisting in their saddles. Some walked to ease limping horses. Farles, chuckling, carried several in on two buck-boards—account of that's how they felt. The posse kept together going back. They ate down at the half-way Wet Sands Spring. They arrived late in the day at Plato Court, and they found everybody at the Plaza, they thought to welcome the capture of cattle thieves. Instead, a woman ran out to greet and jeer the sheriff.

"Keefe!" she cried shrilly, "The Black Wings came ridin' in yesterday noon and raided the bank!"

"What!" a dozen posse voices shouted, the bankers turning pale as they leaned to hear, "Did they get the stuff?"

"They did not!" the woman replied, "Dep'ty Sher'f Keefe shot it out with them. Five are in the mortuary. Magpie Jack's locked up in the jail!"

"Browning shot it out—you say?" the sheriff asked, his voice thickening. "He's—he's all right, Jennie?"

"All right! All right—I'll say sure, Sheriff! He come across the Plaza there, he knocked the look-out

down, dropped two as they blanked the door, went inside and got two more. The other, Magpie Jack himself, quit. Hands up—he did! Browney did it!"

"Where is he?" Keefe asked, then bit his lip. "Where is—is my son?"

"On duty—same's ever—bookkeeping. Figurin' the rewards I expect!" the woman laughed, and the crowd yelled for joy.

The sheriff pulled his tired horse to go up to the big court house tie-rail. Three or four others started to follow him, but men of finer feeling checked these with a quick lift of the hand. Every one knew how Keefe had felt about his boy. They didn't want any one to horn in on their meeting, now.

The sheriff went slowly; he dismounted easily; he walked with his shoulders squared up the balcony steps through the corridor to the door marked in gold on black:

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

There he hesitated with his fine right hand on the knob. Presently he entered, softly passing through into the deputy-bookkeeper's den. Beside the wide desk with the books along the back was Deputy Browning Keefe writing a straight, delicate copper-plate entry across a ledger line. Hanging on a black hook, handy at the window frame was a wide belt, with a row of brass cartridges and two huge holstered revolvers, cleaned. The boy froze as he caught out of the corner of his eyes sight of his father's familiar boots. Embarrassed, he held quiet.

"Browning—where did you learn to shoot?" his father asked.

"Why—" the deputy-bookkeeper reached into the back of a large bottom drawer and drew out a bag containing two gallons or so of empty .22 caliber rim fire shells, some his empties. Keefe ran his hand down into the bright copper tubelets.

"I see!" the sheriff said, turning away. That was all he would say about it—ever.

But when the crowd came, Keefe revealed to Undersheriff Kluck.

"Go over to the hardware store and get some glass goldfish bowls."

"What!" Kluck's lower jaw dropped, and then he saw the bags full of the empty .22s, as well as two thousand or so .45 Colts—all empties. He knew what the bowls were for then. The undersheriff blinked, rolled his greenish-gray eyes a time or two and walked over to the deputy-bookkeeper, hat in hand.

"Uh—Mister Keefe!" he greeted, "I was wondering —you know—about if you had any books for learning sheriffing. You see—" he grinned engagingly, "my eddication ain't be'n neglected as much latterly as it used to was! I know, now, I need lessons."

There was a laugh. It was short, though—there still remained a lot of serious business to attend to, keeping the records straight, inquests, and so on.

QUESTIONS

What had Sheriff Byron Keefe accomplished?

Describe his son, Browning. Why did the sheriff make him a bookkeeper?

What did the "hard, husky riders" think of Browning?

Where was the shooting gallery? Describe it.

How had Browning failed in shooting? What had he learned at school?

Tell of his preparations for learning to shoot.

What is the significance of "alternating them in his hands"?

How many shots was he making compared with "any other man in the county"?

How many shells did he shoot before he belted on his standard .45 Colt?

Describe his status after he handled the big .45.

Why did he go alone to practise on "natural targets"?

Is "a running brook of horror" a good picture of a rattlesnake?

Why did Browning not have to aim?

Who saw Browning as a memory? Are most of us given to seeing memories and not actualities among our friends and relatives?

Describe Rink Kluck.

Why did Kluck and other evicted men not go to the courthouse to tell the smarty "what was what"?

What are "cattle rustlers"?

What details of the biggest raid in years are given?

How did Sheriff Keefe taunt his son when Browning would have gone with the others?

What thinking told Browning the ruse of the cattle rustlers?

Tell of Browning's exploits with the bank-robbers.

Why did the sheriff's posse linger when they found only a scene of peace and industry?

How did Keefe feel when Jennie said, "Dep'ty Sheriff Keefe shot it out with them"?

How did father and son meet? How did Kluck make amends for his taunts?

STORIES OF BOYS, MEN, AND GUNS

James Warner Bellah, "Fear" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1927, Doubleday).

W. R. Burnett, "Round Trip" (*Harper's Magazine,* August, 1929); "Dressing-Up" (*Harper's Magazine,* November, 1929).

Donn Byrne, "Biplane No. 2" (*Stories Without Women,*

Hearst's International Library Co.); "Slaves of the Gun" (same volume).

Richard Washburn Child, "The Velvet Black" (Volume title, E. P. Dutton Co.).

Irvin S. Cobb, "The Belled Buzzard" (*The Escape of Mr. Trim,* Geo. H. Doran Co.).

Richard Connell, "The Law Beaters" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1928, Doubleday).

Samuel A. Derieux, "The Sixth Shot" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1922, Doubleday).

Charles Caldwell Dobie, "The Hands of the Enemy" (*Harper Prize Stories*).

John Fox, Jr., "Christmas Eve on Lonesome" (Volume title, Chas. Scribner's Sons).

Ernest Hemingway, "The Killers" (in *Men Without Women,* Chas. Scribner's Sons, and *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1927, Doubleday).

O. Henry, "The Caballero's Way" (*Heart of the West,* or in *The Complete Works of O. Henry,* Doubleday); "A Blackjack Bargainer" (*Whirligigs,* or *Complete Works*).

Joseph Hergesheimer, "Tol'able David" (*The Happy End,* Alfred H. Knopf).

Edward Hope, "Stick 'Em Up!" (*Scribner's Magazine,* November, 1927).

Rupert Hughes, "Going for a Ride" (*Hearst's International and Cosmopolitan,* August, 1928).

Peter B. Kyne, "Soldier Sleep" (*Collier's,* October 1, 1927).

Prosper Mérimée, "Mateo Falcone" (*Great Stories of All Nations,* Lieber and Williams, Brentano).

Melville Davisson Post, "The Doomdorf Mystery" (*Uncle Abner,* D. Appleton & Co.; *Great Stories of All Nations,* Lieber and Williams, Brentano).

Fiswoode Tarleton, "Curtains," "Harvest" (*Bloody Ground,* Dial Press).

After you have read several of these stories, write a composition on the good use versus the bad use of firearms.

HERO

BY

ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE

Albert Payson Terhune

Albert Payson Terhune was born in Newark, New Jersey, December 21, 1872. After taking his A.B. degree, Columbia University, 1893, he traveled on horseback for a year in Syria and Egypt, visiting leper colonies and living among the Bedouins of the desert. On his return to America, he joined the staff of the *New York Evening World,* with which he was connected for twenty-five years. His first volume, entitled *Syria from the Saddle,* was followed by *Columbia Stories,* 1897, and by a book in collaboration with his mother, who is better known as "Marion Harland." This novel, *Dr. Dale,* is said to be the first instance on record of a novel written jointly by mother and son. A breeder of prize-winning collies, Mr. Terhune is adding to his long list of books many short stories on dogs, which show knowledge of their characteristics in a way no modern writer has outrivaled. *Lad, a Dog,* 1919, was followed by tales about "Buff," "Gray Dawn," and their friends. In "Hero," he happily combines a dog and a cat.

HERO [1]

THEY named him "Hero." This when he was two months old; and when his ruffianly barks defied the world at large; especially his closest friends. He was such a courageously aggressive little fluff of gold-brown fur and so idiotically fearless that the name seemed to fit every active inch of him. Within two days, he was answering to the call of "Hero! Come, Hero!" with gaily truculent immediateness—when he bothered to answer to it at all.

A year later, the name "Hero" fitted him as a double-width woollen blanket might fit a lady bug.

The Marriotts had been vastly proud of the rabbit-sized collie baby. But the Marriotts were vastly ashamed of the rabbit-hearted collie giant that Hero had grown into.

True, he was beautiful, in coat and contour and head and frame. But his deep-set dark eyes had not the "look of eagles" which should go with such a combination. They were mild; even cowlike of aspect. Not theirs the mingled sternness and fun which are the keynote of collie expression.

They were eyes which revealed their possessor's chronic outlook on life. In them was an infinite gentleness, and not a hint of spirit. They gave a queerly bovine cast to Hero's countenance. A dog judge would have wondered at being so little impressed by the

[1] *Delineator,* October, 1928. *Copyright,* Albert Payson Terhune. Reprinted by special permission of the author.

magnificent animal; until he took time to study each feature separately and realized that the eyes were laughably uncollielike.

"I don't mind his being gentle," grumbled Rance Marriott. "Gentleness is the grandest thing in the world. But only when it has a foundation of spirit and strength behind it. If it hasn't that kind of a backing it isn't gentleness, at all. It's—lord, I don't know *what* it is. It—it's Hero!"

"But he's so obedient and friendly," protested Hilda Marriott. "He's never the least bother, and—"

"And never the least joy, either," supplemented her husband. "If he were human, he'd be one of those boys who never cause their mothers a moment's uneasiness—nor cause anyone else a moment's pleasure. When he was a baby, I used to worry about the fights he'd get into when he grew up, and the neighborhood quarrels they were due to cause. But——"

"I hate a quarrelsome dog!" put in Hilda.

"So do I," agreed Rance. "They're pests. But one wants his dog to be something more than a sheep. Whenever I'm walking with him and we pass the Brendas', that husky police dog of Sam Brendas' comes charging out. He tackled Hero in earnest, the first time. Nowadays he does it for a joke. He sails into Hero and knocks him over and rolls him in the gutter and nips him; until I interfere. Does Hero take his own part? He does not! The first time and ever since, he just sprawls there, meekly, and lets himself be rough-housed. Then when the police dog has been driven off, Hero gets up serenely and trots along with me; without an atom of shame for the way he's been

licked. It's the same when a cur half his size tackles him. Hero just curls up and lets himself be thrashed."

Out on to the veranda bounded the big bronze collie; his expression almost excited—for Hero. Up to Rance and then to Hilda he capered; barking and then galloping back to the front door, and returning to repeat the same performance.

"What's happened?" wondered Rance. "He looks almost alive. Is it a new game he's invented or——"

"He wants us to go somewhere with him," translated Hilda. "See how he runs from one to the other of us and back to the hallway. Come along."

Reluctantly her husband followed his interested wife. As they started toward the hall, Hero gamboled delightedly ahead; and to the top of the cellar stairs. There he waited only long enough to make certain his owners were close behind him. Then down the stairs he pattered.

"Come along!" begged Hilda, as Rance hesitated. "Let's see what it is he's trying to show us."

"A man-eating mouse, probably," suggested Rance; adding, "but, no, that can't be it. For he'd never have the sublime courage to approach a mouse of his own accord."

The dog came running up the steps; whined eagerly and trotted down them again. This time, the Marriotts followed. At the foot of the stairs Rance turned the electric switch on, flooding the shadowy place with light.

Hero was standing proudly above a pile of soft rags, in a far corner. On the rag couch lay the Marriotts'

gray Persian cat, Fathma, blinking lazily up at them. Cuddled snugly against her furry underbody, squirmed four tiny and varicolored new-born kittens.

Fathma was strangely non-temperamental and easy-going for a Persian. She and Hero had been brought up together. Violating the cat-and-dog tradition, they had always been on comfortable terms, their mutual mildness serving to avert quarrels.

Now, Hero was athrill with excited interest at discovering Fathma's children. As soon as Rance and Hilda bent over the rag bed to look at the kittens, the collie rushed up the back cellar stairs to the kitchen; whence he reappeared presently, coaxing the cook down to view the newcomers.

Fathma did not resent in any way the dog's rowdyish gambolings around her impromptu nest. Doubtless she knew there was no mischief in the bovine collie. She lay there and purred, blinking sleepily; now and then licking one or another of her babies with a rough pink tongue.

That night, Hero did not sleep on his rug, outside Hilda Marriott's door, where he had slept ever since he was a puppy. Instead, he, the inveterate comfort-seeker, stretched his mighty bulk on the concrete floor of the cellar, as close as might be to Fathma and her babies.

"He's found his true rôle in life, at last," sneered Rance. "He's Mother's Little Helper; or The Nursery Aid! As a collie he is a grand kitten-nurse."

Hilda did not join in her husband's mirth at his own scoffing characterization of the collie she loved. To her there was something vaguely pathetic in the huge

dog's absorbed interest in this family of new-born baby cats and in his air of protection over them. True, it was undoglike and especially was it uncollielike. But it did not seem funny to her.

That was the beginning. Every day, and practically all day, and every night and all night, Hero lay or sat or stood as guard over the litter of Persians. The cellar-corner became his chosen abode. Gravely, by the hour, he would survey the fast-growing kittens, sometimes touching them gingerly with his forepaw or sniffing at them. He was in dire misery when a load of coal rattled noisily down the chute one day; and he interposed his own bulk between it and the corner where the kittens were.

One day, he and Fathma had their first quarrel. Playfully Hero rolled one of the kittens over with his nose. He was unintentionally rough. The kitten squalled in protest. Fathma flew to the rescue; side-swiping Hero right virulently across the nostrils with punitive claws.

The dog fled howling until he reached the top of the cellar stairs. There he stood, in comic dismay, slapping alternately at his scratched and bleeding nose, and peering fearfully down at the scene of his ill treatment.

Step by step, at long intervals, he descended to the cellar and crept trembling along the floor until once more he was near the nest. Fear of further punishment made him shake as with a chill. But the craving to return to his duty as guard overcame his dread.

To his relief, Fathma made no attempt to renew the strife. Nor, sharply taught by that one lesson, did

Hero make further playful advances toward the kittens. He contented himself with sniffing at them now and then; and in lying with his head between his forepaws, watching.

Loudly and frequently did Rance deride this new phase of the dog he had grown to despise. He took guests down to the cellar-corner to behold the kittens' canine nurse. With all a collie's odd sensitiveness, Hero seemed to realize he had become an object of ridicule. He winced and cringed, when laughter greeted the spectacle of a great bronze dog brooding over a nestful of kittens. But he did not desert his post. It would have taken more than mere derision to drive him from his adored little protegées.

The babies waxed larger and stronger. No longer did they content themselves with huddling in the nest. Now, with sprawling feet and unwieldy little fat bodies and stiffly erect rudimentary tails they set forth on exploring expeditions along the cellar floor.

Their eyes were long since open, and they had learned to creep. A pretty sight it was, to watch the fluffy mites crawling about the worriedly delighted big dog, while their sleepy mother looked placidly on.

One of them, in particular—a snow-white morsel of felinity whose china blue eyes were beginning to fleck with green—picked Hero as her own chum, by the time she was able to move. She would climb over his paws or would cuddle against his chest or would play in awkward vehemence with his plumed tail.

Pleased and inordinately proud was Hero of this distinction. He would lick the kitten all over; and

would lie uncomplaining, as her sharp claws dug playfully into his sensitive tail. The other catkins did not show any great interest in him. Thus, from the start, he and the white kitten were exclusive playfellows and pals.

Fathma was a good mother, as Persian mothers go. But she was a family pet; and her place ever had been upstairs with the humans of the household. When her kittens were able to get along without her for an hour or two at a time, she would leave them with Hero and would run daintily upstairs to seek out Hilda or Rance or the servants.

When the kittens were graduated from the cellar to the wood-shed and were allowed to play daily on the lawn in the spring sunshine, he and the white kitten had gorgeous romps together. Their friendship was pretty to watch. Even Rance Marriott grinned with grudging approval at their play.

"Of course it was just like the poor fool to pick out the one we're selling first," commented Rance. "I suppose Hero will mope around, and look more like a sick calf than ever when she's gone. I'm sorry for him. For he's found the one creature on earth that doesn't either bully him or despise him."

"I don't bully him," denied Hilda, "and I don't despise him. And I wish you hadn't promised Sam Brendas that particular kitten. You know how fond Hero is of her, and——"

"And I had promised Sam his choice of the four," interrupted Rance. "I'm sorry to have to disappoint the noble Hero. Sam is sending for the kitten tomorrow afternoon. Will you have her brushed up a bit

beforehand, please? And stick Hero in a closet or somewhere."

Mid-afternoon, next day, Hilda Marriott came out on the lawn, where Hero snoozed with the white kitten cuddled up asleep between his paws. Picking up the furry wisp in her arms, Hilda whistled to the dog. Happily he trotted indoors after her and his kitten pal. There, to his pained surprise, he was lured into an upper room and the door was shut behind him.

He scratched plaintively at the door. But nobody came to let him out. In a little while he heard voices downstairs: Hilda's voice and another woman's.

Readily the dog recognized this second voice. It belonged to a guest who came often to the Marriotts'; a guest who lived in the house where that snarling police dog lived; the dog that mishandled Hero so unmercifully, on such few occasions as they chanced to meet before Hero had time to run ki-yi-ing for safety.

Failing to gain egress from his prison by way of the door, the collie sought to amuse himself by trotting to the window and gazing interestedly down into the street. This was one of Hero's best liked occupations——

Hero's academic interest in the scene sharpened. Mrs. Sam Brendas had left the Marriott house and was walking down the street. In her arms she was carrying something.

As she turned the corner, Hero saw what the "something" was.

It was his chum, his pal, his idol—the tiny white Persian kitten!

Something went queer in Hero's placidly gentle brain.

The spirits of a horde of collie ancestors—collies that

had guarded with their lives their masters' belongings, collies that had known gleamingly stanch loyalty to their friends—snarled fiery commands into the peaceful cosmos of this too-meek descendant of theirs.

Back to the door he ran; tearing at its panels with claws and teeth. It stood firm.

To the window he dashed. The room was on the second floor, just above the side veranda. But, for all Hero cared, it might have been on the thirtieth story of a skyscraper. It offered the only means of escape—and he took his chance.

With a great diving leap he flung himself at the glass pane. Through the brittle barrier he crashed; with all the driving force of his seventy pounds and his immense muscular power.

He struck against the somewhat steep veranda roof; rolling and sliding down it to the edge; then bouncing out into space again. His falling body smote the very center of a thick and high lilac clump, just beyond the porch.

Through this barrier his weight carried him groundward; the myriad little branches and twigs breaking his fall, so that he landed on the grass with no worse hurt than a breath-ejecting bump.

By the time he hit the lawn he was on his feet and in flying motion. Across the sward he sped; and to the sidewalk and down the street and around the corner; galloping with body close to earth and with hackles bristling. He knew well where Mrs. Sam Brendas lived; and whither, presumably, she was carrying his kitten friend. Not an inch did he swerve from his route.

Men were beginning to stroll up the street on their way homeward from business. These, by instinct, gave wide berth to the bleeding and savagely onrushing collie.

A dog or two came running out from dooryards, drawn by the sight of the galloper. But Hero whizzed past them unheeding. Such of them as undertook to chase him had their labor for their pains. For no dog, save only a racing greyhound, can hope to catch up with a collie that is running at full speed.

Hero came in sight of his goal in time to see Mrs. Brendas open her own front door and disappear within the hallway. She was carrying the scared white kitten. The kitten was scared because a giant police dog had sprung up from the mat and had come toward her. With a sharp word, Mrs. Brendas ordered the dog back to his resting place; and she bore the kitten indoors.

As the door shut behind her, Hero came dashing up the walk in belated pursuit. The police dog caught sight of the flying collie, as Hero swung in from the street. Avidly, the bigger canine went into action; lunging to the slaughter. The police dog's temper had been ruffled by the scent of the alien kitten and by his owner's curt rebuff of his advances.

Here was a chance to wipe out that ruffle of temper —by manhandling the foolish and cowardly collie he had thrashed so often. This was to be no semi-playful nipping and rolling of the spiritless Hero. The collie had invaded the sanctity of the front yard itself and was rushing toward the sacredly guarded veranda. The insolence of his act called for a drastic and dramatic punishment.

In savage glee, the police dog launched himself at the erstwhile craven, as the latter prepared to clear the veranda steps at a single leap.

Perfect love casteth out fear.

In all his despised young life, Hero had not found anything, hitherto, worth losing his temper over. He had seen no need to fight. He had had no desire in his gentle heart to harm anyone or anything.

When he had been attacked and bullied by other dogs, their enmity had puzzled and pained his friendly spirit. He had seen no reason for fighting back. It had been easier to submit gently and resistingly to their onslaughts and then to get himself out of their way as soon as he could.

But today, most emphatically, he had something to fight for. His fluffy little white playmate had just been carried into that house. And an ugly giant dog was trying to bar him from following and rescuing her. The dog, and every other obstacle, must be gotten rid of before Hero could continue his search for the kitten.

Again, into the unused reaches at the back of his brain, were snarled the commands of his fearless collie ancestors—terrible warriors all—as well as the sterner orders of his more remote forbears, the wolves.

They were bidding him to fight. More, they were telling him *how* to fight; even as the instincts of herd-dog ancestors often tell an untried young collie pup how to bunch sheep and drive them.

All this, in the minutest fraction of a second, and while the police dog was charging to the slaughter.

Instead of the meekly crouching collie of their last encounter, the police dog found his charge met by a

maniac devil swathed in shimmering bronze fur. Grappling, roaring, slashing, rending, they rolled down the steps together, locked in a most untender embrace.

As their falling bodies smote the flagstones of the path below, they flashed apart and to their feet, flinging themselves ragingly at each other's throats.

This was the sight which confronted Rance Marriott and Sam Brendas as, together, they rounded the corner of the street. This was the sight which made Mrs. Brendas drop the white kitten and run to the front door in consternation.

The police dog's first gust of temper had merged into murder-lust at this utterly unforeseen opposition from the collie he had bullied and beaten at will since puppyhood. Into the fray he threw himself with a hideous zest, seeking a vital spot that he might rip open; seeking to bear down and crush and destroy the erstwhile sheeplike invader of his own dooryard's privacy.

But, as a billion times before, in the war history of this pugnacious old planet of ours, it is one thing to desire to annihilate and it is wholly another thing to be able to do it. Much depends on the attitude of the annihilatee. The police dog was a renowned battler, and a veteran of many bloody frays. But a fighting collie is not like any other fighter in all dogdom. And this the punitive police dog was beginning to discover.

Hero was everywhere in general and nowhere in particular. Now he was stabbing with lightning speed under the rearing enemy's forelegs, and slashing with cruel efficiency the other's fawn-colored underbody. Now he was slipping eel-like from what threatened to be a death-grip and was raking the police dog's tawny

shoulder with curved eye-teeth; or he was snapping part of an ear.

So do wolves fight. So does the lupine hereditary instinct teach many a collie to fight.

Once and again, the larger dog sought to bear Hero to earth by sheer weight and ferocity. Once and again did the collie elude the charge, and counter with deep bite or slash. Twice Hero was knocked off his flying feet. But a collie down is almost never a collie beaten.

He fell with his feet bunched under him; and by the time he hit ground he was either springing to one side, slashing as he leaped, or else was rolling compactly out of range of the frightful jaws that ravened at him.

It was a beautiful exhibition of science against bull strength. The police dog was bleeding from twenty greater or lesser hurts. Hero was all but unwounded. The police dog was beginning to breathe noisily and laboriously. Hero flashed about him, as fresh as at the start.

Roaring and foaming, the police dog drove once more for the throat. The collie ducked under the great lunging head and dug his teeth with wrenching force and leverage into the nearer of the fawn-hued forelegs of his foe. Thus does the wolf seek to cripple an antagonist by breaking his legs.

Hero got his grip; and got it fair. He held on, and wrenched, clamping his strong young jaws like a vise into flesh and sinew—toward the bone. But the maneuver left the back of his neck exposed to the dog above him. Like a striking snake, the police dog's head darted forward. His mighty jaws seized the nape; grinding murderously toward the spinal cord.

Now this is a death-grip; and instinct told the collie its nature, even while acute pain and sudden helplessness surged through him. He took his one chance. With every atom of despairing power and skill, he braced himself and wrenched afresh at the leg-hold he had gained.

For perhaps three seconds the dogs remained thus, outwardly motionless. Then there was a snap, as of a twig. With a screech of agony, the police dog released his grip on the nape of Hero's neck, and strove to seek safety in retreating. But his snapped foreleg—it was two months before he could walk on it again—gave way under him.

Hero stood for a moment, panting and eyeing the victim. Then he seemed to remember his mission at that house. Up the steps he rushed, pushing past the panic-paralyzed Mrs. Brendas and into the hallway.

Thence, in another second, he emerged. Between his bloody jaws he carried tenderly and gingerly a fluff of white fur. He had found and rescued his little chum; after overcoming the dragon that guarded the portal. Now he was bearing her forth from that house of bondage; and he was going to carry her home where she belonged.

Past the gabbling and stupidly marveling men Hero cantered; deaf to Marriott's belated call to him. Two minutes later he laid the kitten down gently at Hilda Marriott's feet. Then, apparently, he remembered that his master had called him and that he had not obeyed. Licking the kitten's tousled fur, once, in rough good fellowship, Hero left her there and cantered out of the house.

Meantime, both men had found their tongues; as had Mrs. Brendas. Out of the babel, presently, rose Rance Marriott's voice, loudly, compelling attention.

"I get the whole idea!" he declared. "Hero loves that kitten as he doesn't love anything else. He came here after it. Your dog stopped him; but he couldn't stop him for long. Then Hero went in and got what he came for. You can guy me, if you like, you people. Hero fought for her and he won her, fair. You can have your cash back or you can have any two of the three other kittens instead. But you can't have the white one. Neither can anyone else. She belongs to Hero. Is that understood?"

Sam Brendas looked up from his task of tending his police dog's hurts.

"All right," he agreed. "And we can settle the terms, later on. Now give me a hand in carrying Hindenburg into the house, while Mary phones for the vet."

As Marriott came out of the Brendas house, three minutes later, on his way home, a right direful figure arose stiffly from the police dog's favorite porch mat and came in gay good fellowship to greet him.

Rance stared down at his collie. Not at the cuts and other hurts that decorated his splendid body, but at the deep-set dark eyes upraised to his. Those eyes flashed with a queer light that changed the whole expression of Hero's classic face.

"The true collie look!" babbled Rance, foolishly, as he caught the hurt head lovingly between his two hands. "'The look of eagles!' Hero——"

His voice thickened in his throat. But Hero understood. Wagging his plumed tail, he led the way out

of the gate and toward home. As they turned the corner into their own street, a neighbor's dog swaggered blusteringly out. This was a mongrel dog that delighted to chase Hero under the Marriott veranda every time he could catch him in the street.

In something less than half a minute, now, the mongrel aggressor was ki-yi-ing, in astonished flight, to the safety of his own kennel; with an ugly slash along the side of his head and with one forepaw sprained.

"Hero!" rebuked Marriott, fondly, as he called his frisking collie back to him. "You'd be a grand walking companion, if it wasn't that you have one bad fault—you're too quarrelsome. Try to get over the habit of going around with a chip on your shoulder, you—you glorious pal of mine!"

QUESTIONS

Compare Hero's character at two months with the character he had achieved a year later.

What did Marriott think of him? Hilda? When did Marriott become most sarcastic?

Describe Hero's interest in the Persians. How did he rouse Fathma's anger?

Tell about his friendship with the blue-eyed kitten.

Where did you get the first hint that Hero again would justify his name?

Tell what followed Mrs. Brendas's carrying off the kitten.

At what point does the author quote, "Perfect love casteth out fear"?

When did Marriott and Brendas come upon the scene?

What did Hero remember as soon as he won the fight? What, afterward?

When did Marriott see "the look of eagles"?

What incident is added to show that Hero is, in truth, a real collie?

Write a story about your pet dog or cat, your neighbor's dog or cat, or about any animal with whose habits you are most familiar.

DOG STORIES

Arthur K. Akers, "Wolf! Wolf!" (*Red Book,* February, 1930).

Henry C. Bunner, "Hector" (*Short Sixes,* Chas. Scribner's Sons).

Zane Grey, "Don" (Title of volume published by Harper; or, see *Real Dogs,* C. W. Gray, Henry Holt & Co.).

Jack London, *The Call of the Wild* (Long story, Macmillan Co.).

Albert Payson Terhune, "Cephas" (*Red Book,* January, 1930).

See also the list on page 175.

THE LITTLE NEW NEIGHBOR

BY

JOHN PETER TOOHEY

John Peter Toohey

Born in Binghamton, New York, September 18, 1880, John Peter Toohey was educated in the schools of his home town. He was a newspaper man in Washington and New York before turning to short stories, novels, and plays. His comedy, *Jonesy,* in collaboration with Anne Morrison; his novel, *Growing Pains,* and the tale here presented all illustrate his fresh and wholesome humor.

THE LITTLE NEW NEIGHBOR [1]

MRS. AMES covertly watched her husband. She was waiting for the precise moment when his interest in the evening paper would have sufficiently lagged to permit her to introduce a subject which vitally concerned her happiness during the approaching fall and winter. She swayed slowly back and forth in the porch swing, apparently lazily unconcerned about the world and its affairs, but her mind was intensely busy formulating arguments and devising effective answers to anticipated objections on the part of the unsuspecting gentleman who sat a few feet away from her.

From down the street came the whir of a lawn-mower, and the shrill voices of two boys, who seemed to be engaged in acrimonious discussion in the rear of the house, occasionally rose to a disturbing volume. Once when they attained a pitch of snarling violence for a moment Frank Ames dropped his paper on his lap and turned around in annoyance.

"Who on earth is that with Georgie?" he inquired. "Can't I have ten minutes of peace and quiet in my own home without having such an eternal racket turned on? Who is that kid, anyway?"

"It's a new boy who's just moved into that yellow house on the next block," she explained. "Georgie and he are great pals already. The new boy is usually

[1] *Pictorial Review,* February, 1928. Reprinted by special permission of the author.

rather quiet. I had hoped that he might have a restraining influence on Georgie."

"Huh!" snorted Mr. Ames. "I guess a set of leg-irons and a pair of handcuffs are about the only things that would restrain a nine-year-old boy like that kid."

Having delivered himself of this sage and meaty observation, he once more immersed himself in the *Evening Bulletin.* His wife resumed her policy of watchful waiting. It was fifteen minutes later before he reached the "want ad" page and appeared to be ready for conversation.

"Oh, Frank," she began in a casual tone as if the idea had just occurred to her, "I knew there was something I wanted to tell you. Lulu and I went through the attic to-day and I opened up most of the tar-paper bags. I think I'd better send all your suits out to be dry-cleaned; that is, all except the brown one. I'm going to sell that."

"What's the matter with the brown suit?" he asked with a certain aggression.

"It's messy-looking and fady, and there's a cigar-burn on the cuff and——"

"It's all right. Anyhow it'll do very nicely for the present."

"It simply will not. I've made up my mind about that. I want you to get a new one with pin stripes—a dark blue. In fact I really think you'd ought to have *two* new ones. That gray flannel is getting seedy-looking too."

"Don't you dare sell the gray," he said sharply. "Seedy? Why, it's practically as good as new."

"But I *can* sell the brown?"

"Oh, yes, I suppose so."

"And you will get a new blue one?"

"Oh, maybe. I'll see. There isn't any rush. I'd better wait and read all about 'What the well-dressed man will wear' in next month's magazines."

He laughed sarcastically, and silence ensued. Mrs. Ames continued to swing lazily, eyeing him cautiously.

"I was looking at my winter coat too," she began, after a brief pause. "Of course, I suppose I *could* do with it for a few months, maybe until the first of the year if it was absolutely necessary, but it's—well, it's a little *passé,* to put it mildly. Did you notice the Mitchell & Adams ad in the *Bulletin?"*

"No, I can't say that I did," he replied in a far-off, unconcerned tone.

"Of course you wouldn't. I don't suppose men ever read ads about women's things except there's a tall creature in corsets and silk stockings in them to catch the eye. They've got a sale of fur coats on there for the next two weeks and the values are something extraordinary. I know values, Frank, and they're simply remarkable with a capital R."

Mr. Ames's response to this breathlessly imparted information took the form of a barely audible grunt. His wife continued the assault.

"There's a French seal for two hundred dollars that's lovely," she continued. "It looks just like the real thing, and real seal coats, you know, Frank, sell for five and six hundred. It's got the darlingest deep collar and it looks just stunning on me. I tried it on this afternoon. Of course I wouldn't think of asking for a *real* seal in a hundred years, but I thought that possibly

I'd ought to take advantage of this opportunity. They'll raise the price next month when the demand gets big, and you know I've never had a fur coat since we've been married, and, as I said before, the first of the year is the outside limit that I can wear last year's coat and look respectable and hold my head up without being ashamed. Don't you think I'd ought to get it *now?*"

"Now, Bessie," began Mr. Ames, "you know as well as I do that the little old bank-balance isn't any too large and that we——"

"I know the rest of that speech," she broke in. "We've got to economize because Georgie is growing up and in a few years he'll be ready for college and that will be a great expense. Why, it'll be eight or nine years before Georgie goes to college, and if you think that I'm going to walk around looking like a frump until he's graduated and settled in a good job you're sadly mistaken."

"I wish you wouldn't always pick me up like that, Bessie," remonstrated her husband. "I wasn't going to say anything about Georgie and college at all. I *was* going to say something about economy, I'll admit, but I guess it wouldn't do any good. I guess you've got your 'mind sot,' as my grandmother used to say."

"Then you *will* give me a check for it?"

"I won't just this minute. I'll drop around there myself when Jimmie Thurber gets back from New York. He's the assistant manager and we play golf together. You've heard me talk about him. I'll get him to tip me off to the real values and give me the absolute low-down and maybe a discount. Just hold your horses for a little while and be patient."

"Frank," said Mrs. Ames softly, "you're a nice man."

"Oh, I'd hardly go so far as to say that if I were you."

"And you *will* get that pin-stripe suit for yourself, won't you?"

"Oh, I don't know that I can *now,* with your extravagant ideas about fur coats and everything."

"You're horrid," she murmured.

He chuckled as a soft cushion hit him full in the face.

It was early the next afternoon that Mrs. Ames found herself involved in the affairs of Freddie Jefferson, Georgie's new playmate. It was just after lunch. Her son came quietly into the living-room, where she was patiently piecing together certain of his shirts in an effort to make them stand the strain of one more laundering. Behind him came the little new neighbor, a pale, wistful-looking lad with a shock of unmanageable blond hair which draped itself in untidy masses over his forehead. He stood in the doorway, and Mrs. Ames thought as she looked up that he seemed strangely pinched and pathetic-looking.

"Mother," began Georgie cautiously, "I want to ask a favor of you. Freddie here didn't have enough to eat at lunch to-day, and I thought maybe we could let him have something that was left over."

"Why, yes—why, of course," replied his mother. "What's the matter, Freddie? Did you lose your appetite and find it again?"

The little figure in the doorway stirred and moved into the room, twirling a cap nervously.

"No, ma'am," he replied. "I didn't lost my appe-

tite. I guess I've had an appetite as far back as I can remember—I guess maybe three or four years."

"I see. That's fine. Why didn't you eat a big lunch at home then?"

"I did—all I got."

"All you got? But surely you *could* have eaten all you wanted to, couldn't you?"

"He could *not,*" broke in Georgie in a tone that indicated a pitying contempt for his mother's lack of understanding. "His old stepmother don't give him enough to eat ever."

"Georgie Ames, how dare you say such a thing?" said his mother, aghast.

"Well, it's true. You ask him and see. He's been tellin' me all about it, and it made me feel sorry for him. You ask him and see."

"I will not!" said Mrs. Ames emphatically. "It's outrageous for you to talk about other people that way. I'm ashamed of you."

"Well, it's true all right. There's a lot of that gelatin pudding left. You let him have it. You like gelatin pudding, don't you, Freddie?"

"I don't know about that *kind* of pudding," replied Freddie hesitatingly. "I had *one* kind of pudding about a year ago when we lived in Cleveland—just *one* dish of it—and I liked *that.* I guess I'd like to try and see if I wouldn't like this kind, if it wouldn't be too much trouble."

He turned a pair of wistful eyes on Mrs. Ames, and that gentle lady felt a tug at her heart-strings that was irresistible. She put her sewing down quickly and moved out into the kitchen, followed by the two boys.

In a few moments she set before Freddie a great saucer of quivering raspberry gelatin topped with snowy whipped cream. The boy pulled a chair up to the porcelain table and began a systematic demolishment of the generous portion, punctuating the intervals between mouthfuls with half-choked gurgles of sheer joy.

"I guess maybe now you'll believe he was hungry and don't get enough to eat from that old stepmother of his," remarked Georgie, who was watching the proceedings with the intense professional interest of a scientist conducting a laboratory experiment.

" 'S fine," murmured Freddie, sucking in another dripping spoonful of the sweet mixture.

Mrs. Ames forgot to remonstrate with Georgie for his latest breach of good manners. She was too interested in the spectacle of this apparently famished youngster finding happiness at her hands. She found herself fairly tingling with pleasure as he scraped up the last traces of the dessert and wiped a smeared mouth on the back of a smudgy hand.

"Don't you really have pudding often?" inquired Mrs. Ames solicitously.

Freddie shook his head mournfully.

"I don't never have it," he replied sadly. "I don't get anything for my lunch but bread and butter and milk, and sometimes I don't even get butter, except on maybe one or two slices. It's kinda all accordin'——"

"All according to what, dear?" she inquired gently, putting an arm around his shoulder and pinioning his rumpled head in a motherly embrace.

"Accordin' to the way she feels."

"The way who feels, dear?"

"Aw, his old stepmother," interrupted Georgie. "I told you he told me she most nearly starves him all the time."

Mrs. Ames felt obliged to cast a reproving glance at her offspring, but her heart was distinctly not in the performance.

"Have you really got a stepmother?" she asked softly.

"Yes, ma'am," replied Freddie. "I've had her now about three years or so, ever since back in Toledo, before we moved to Cleveland."

"And your own dear mother is dead?"

"Yes, ma'am. She was—she was—well, I guess strangulated or something like that."

"Strangled—you don't mean to say she was strangled?" Mrs. Ames was breathless.

"Yes, ma'am. Papa and I were down visitin' my aunt in the country, and when we came back some burglars had got in the house and strangulated my mother with a piece of clothes-line, and took all the silverware and jewelry and everything and eight dollars and forty-five cents I had in a bank that looked like a pumpkin."

"You poor little dear," murmured Mrs. Ames tremulously. "I suppose you were very sorry for your mother."

"Yes, ma'am, I cried most every night for a week or so and papa cried too, and there wasn't anybody to put me to bed at night and hear me say my prayers and I was lonesome. Papa was lonesome too. I guess that's why we've got my stepmother."

"But she means to be kind to you, I'm sure. Surely

she *must* want to be kind to a dear little fellow like you."

Freddie sighed dismally.

"Maybe she *wants* to be," he said plaintively. "She keeps tellin' papa she wants to be always, and he tells me not to say anything about her or anything, and I guess I hadn't better say anything more, or maybe she'll hear about it, or somebody'd tell papa, and then most likely—most likely anything would happen."

He stood up and looked around apprehensively. Tears glistened in Mrs. Ames's eyes as she watched him.

"Perhaps you hadn't better say anything more, dear," she said, "but you can trust me. I won't tell your papa or your stepmother. I wouldn't think of such a thing. I'll tell you what—we can play a little game. We'll pretend that I'm your real mother from now on, and if you have any little troubles or worries you can come to me with them. Would you like that?"

"Yes, ma'am," he replied with a touch of enthusiasm, "only you got to promise you won't tell anybody. Cross your heart or you may drop dead."

"Cross my heart or I may drop dead," repeated Mrs. Ames as a smile gleamed through her tears.

"I guess if I was older it'd be a good thing if I got together a band of bandits or something and kidnapped that old stepmother," remarked Georgie emphatically.

"Georgie, don't be vicious in your thoughts," responded his mother. "Try to remember that we must always *try* to love every one else, no matter what we may really think about them."

"That's kinda foolish, that is," commented her son

as he and his companion wandered out into the back yard in search of new diversion.

Mrs. Ames moved slowly to the doorway and watched them at play. A glow of tenderness warmed her whole being.

Vague echoes of Dr. Milburn's sermon on "Service," preached at the vesper service at St. Agatha's a week before, came back to her. "Succor the needy, bind up the wounds of the suffering, seek to give peace and love to the troubled spirit, for in such ways only can we secure the divine content which is so greatly to be desired."

She already felt herself on the highroad toward the attainment of that content. This little child should lead her on—that was it—"and a little child shall lead them." Her spirit filled with a beautiful serenity, she went back to the disordered array of torn shirts in the living-room.

She longed to tell her husband at dinner that night all about the incident and her new mission, but the memory of the promise the dear little fellow had exacted held her in check. Frank might not understand at first. Perhaps later she could tell him something about it—in the weeks to come when she would have more securely won the faith and affection of the lad with the rumpled hair.

She waited for Freddie on the porch the next morning with two luscious yellow peaches in her lap. He came slouching along the street, his wizened little brow contracted into a frown and his hair more mussed and untidy than ever. He came through the gate and straight up the gravel path to her.

"Good morning, dear," said Mrs. Ames softly.

He nodded and mumbled something unintelligible. His eyes were fixed longingly on the peaches.

"Would you like these?" she asked.

"If you could spare one, I would," he murmured almost apologetically.

"I can spare both of them. They're just for you."

She beamed with delight as she watched his avid inroads on the first peach.

"Don't you ever have fruit in the morning?" she inquired.

He paused for a moment to wipe away on a coat-sleeve several streams of juice which were converging on the point of his chin.

"No, ma'am, nothin' but oatmeal. She never gives me fruit. She don't like fruit herself and I guess she thinks no one else likes it. Once I had a pear, though—about—about—well, I guess maybe it was about six months ago now. Papa gave it to me one night when she was out at the movies and told me not to tell her anything about it."

"You poor, poor dear," murmured Mrs. Ames, laying her hand gently on his free arm. "I'll see that you get fruit—every morning. I'll have pears for you to-morrow morning. Won't that be fine?"

"Can I have two, the same as now?"

"Of course you can—two of something *every* morning."

He looked at her with more than a suspicion of doubt in his dull blue eyes.

"You ain't foolin' me, are you? Promise—cross your heart or you may drop dead."

She repeated the oath with due solemnity and the necessary accompanying gesture. He grinned expansively.

"Golly!" he said with enthusiasm. "You're just like a *regular* mother, you are!"

She liked the emphasis he had put on the word "regular," and the memory of it lingered pleasantly with her all morning while the two youngsters romped in the yard. That afternoon when he came back from his bread-and-butter lunch she had a heaping dish of ice-cream ready for him in the kitchen.

"He eats that kind of ravelous, don't he?" commented Georgie, who was developing a fatherly interest in his new playmate. "Just like one of them trappers when they've been out on the trail for a week or so without food and dodgin' Indians and everything and they come to some old settler's hut and get all they want to eat. They're always ravelous like that."

" 'Ravenous' is the word," corrected Mrs. Ames.

"I know—that's what wolves always is," remarked Freddie between spoonfuls. "That's what she always calls me when I eat fast—a little wolf."

Mrs. Ames had no opportunity to bestow favors upon her new protégé the next morning. He did not appear at the customary hour, and Georgie returned just before noon from a fruitless visit to the yellow house down the street.

"That old stepmother told me he couldn't come out this morning," he grunted, "and maybe not this afternoon. I'll bet she's punishin' him for something. I'll bet she's doin' something cruel to him like you read about in fairy-tales."

"Oh, I wouldn't say that, dear," admonished his mother. "What does she look like?"

"Aw, she's kinda—kinda—well, she wears glasses and she's just—she looks like—aw, like a school-teacher or some other kinda woman like that."

It was nearly four o'clock that afternoon when Georgie brought Freddie into the house. He was bursting with righteous wrath, and his companion's pathetic little face was more pinched and drawn than the day before.

"Didn't I tell you?" shouted Georgie. "Didn't I tell you she was doin' something cruel to him? You wait and hear what she did—you just wait."

"I'm waiting," remarked Mrs. Ames with a touch of agitation in her voice. "What is it; what's happened?"

She drew Freddie toward her and tried to set him on her lap. He refused to permit this ministration, though he did not draw himself out of her embrace.

"I guess maybe she'd lick me if she found out I told," he mumbled.

"But she won't find out. She can't possibly find out. I won't tell her and I'll make Georgie promise not to mention a word of it. What's happened, little man? Tell your new mother."

Freddie brushed away a furtive tear and snuggled closer.

"Well," he began slowly, "papa went away last night and won't get back until tomorrow, and when he goes away she's always meaner than ever. Just because I didn't say 'Please, mother dear,' this mornin' when I wanted some more oatmeal—she makes me use them words, 'Please, mother dear,' every time I want any-

thing—well, just because I didn't say exactly that this mornin'—only just 'Please'—she said I couldn't go out and play and that she'd show me how to be polite to her by punishin' me so as to make me remember next time."

"Yes, and you just wait and hear what she made him do," interrupted Georgie.

"What was it, dear?" inquired Mrs. Ames tenderly.

"Well," replied Freddie hesitatingly, "she put one of my old suits on me and she took me down cellar and made me shovel coal all mornin'."

"Shovel coal?" echoed Mrs. Ames incredulously.

"Yes, ma'am. There's a lot spilled out of the bin where we had it put when we moved last week, and papa had a new bin made and she made me shovel all that spilled out into that, and I guess maybe there was two or three tons or something like that, and it made me so tired and it hurt my back so that I just wished I was dead or something, and she kept comin' down every little while and tellin' me to hurry up, and so forth. I just finished about a half an hour ago. I'm certainly tired."

He sighed deeply and looked up at his benefactor, who was perilously trembling on the brink of tears.

"I was wonderin'," he resumed before she could speak, "I was wonderin' if you'd give me something to eat because she didn't give me any lunch or anything —said I'd have to wait for supper-time and that *that'd* teach me a lesson about bein' polite to her, too."

"Of course, dear, you can have anything that you wish. I think it's outrageous—it's unbelievable." Mrs. Ames had difficulty in controlling her feelings.

"Can I have them pears you promised me yesterday?"

"Surely."

"And some kinda pudding or something?"

"Of course. There's some lovely Bavarian cream that Lulu has made for dessert to-night."

Georgie Ames watched his companion's onslaught on the Bavarian cream with a certain panicky fear engendered by the feeling that his own portion of the dessert at the dinner-hour was destined to be extremely meager. His mother was reveling in an orgy of compassion. She pressed a second dish of the rich, creamy pudding on Freddie, and only repletion prevented that youngster from consuming a third. Georgie sighed audibly as he made a close inspection of the remains.

Mrs. Ames kissed the forlorn little neighbor when he started home an hour later and gave him a motherly squeeze. His fingers clutched at her arms for a moment in a sudden pressure and her heart leaped.

"Try and be a good boy, dear," she murmured, "and if things don't go right just come and tell Mother Ames all about it in the morning and she'll try to help you forget your troubles."

As she watched him trudge down the shaded street toward the hateful yellow house on the next block her compassionate mood changed to one of crusading righteousness. The neighborhood should be told about this wicked thing that was going on in its midst, this abominable cruelty to a little child. These gentle people, sitting in leisurely contentment on their wide, shaded porches, should be aroused to a sense of their duty to the community. There must be action of some

sort taken, concerted action. She'd speak to Frank about it at dinner.

Frank Ames listened to her pathetic recital of the events of the last few days with a certain languid interest when Georgie had been discreetly sent out to play.

"He's certainly a peaked, half-starved-looking little shaver," he remarked. "I noticed that the first time I saw him. Go ahead with your good work. I suppose you get quite a kick out of it."

"That's no way to talk, Frank Ames. This is no subject for cheap cynicism."

"All right, all right, my dear. No harm meant. I guess I'll do a little gardening tonight. I'll put on my old things."

He stood up and moved toward the hallway, but she stopped him before he was half-way across the room.

"You aren't going to get out of it as easily as that," she remarked.

"Get out of what?" He was plainly puzzled.

"Out of your duty in this matter."

"My duty? You mean about this kid?"

"I certainly do. I've thought it all out and something's just got to be done. We've got to arouse the community, the entire neighborhood, to a sense of its collective duty. You don't suppose that I could sit here content and happy in my own home realizing all the time that within a stone's throw of it a little boy is having the spirit crushed out of him and is being subjected to the most outrageous sort of refined cruelty every day of his life!"

"Now, Bessie, look here, there's no need——"

"Don't try to stop me until I've finished. What I was going to say was that if I couldn't sit contented the *other* mothers in this neighborhood couldn't either if they *knew*. They're just *got* to know, and when they *do* all know we'll be able to do something. We'll arouse a community feeling that will make that outrageous, inhuman woman stop her cruelties. We'll shame her out of them, and if that won't work, I guess between the lot of us we can have that child taken away from her and put some place where he'll have loving hands and hearts to minister to him. You've got to help me in this."

He stamped on the floor in a burst of sudden annoyance.

"Look here!" he inquired. "What are you proposing that I do? Help you start a neighborhood row?"

"I'm proposing that you do your duty to the community, to the cause of suffering humanity."

"Oh, fiddlesticks! That sounds like a line out of a bunk political speech. My duty to the community, *our* duty as a matter of fact, is to mind our own business and keep our noses out of other people's affairs. Put that in your memory-book."

"Frank Ames, I won't be talked to that way. I'm shocked at you. You seem to have lost all sense of decency all of a sudden. "I——"

"And *you've* lost all sense of proportion. You're just on an emotional jag about this cursed kid. Maybe it would be a little better for all concerned if you paid a little more attention to your own child. I

noticed he had a big hole in the knee of his stocking to-night."

"Well, if he had he got it this afternoon. I spend three or four hours every week wearing my eyes out darning his stockings so's we won't have to buy him new ones and that's all the thanks I get. There isn't a child on the block that gets one-half the attention that Georgie does or who is watched over more carefully, and it's just because Georgie *is* looked after so carefully that it breaks my heart to see another child who is abused. And just because I have a sense of right and wrong in such matters and want to help out, my own husband browbeats me and insults me, and—and——"

She dropped into a chair, burying her face in an arm which she flung over the back. Murmurous little sobs came from her. Frank Ames looked distinctly uncomfortable. He always did on occasions of this sort. He walked over slowly and stood hesitatingly just above her.

"Come, Sister," he drawled in a soothing voice as he touched her gently on the shoulder. "Don't get all worked up. I didn't mean anything."

She tried to shake him off with a petulant shrug, but he bent lower.

"I didn't mean anything, I tell you," he continued in the same conciliatory tone; "we've both got sort of het up about nothing. I'm sorry. If this thing's got *us* all worked up this way just think of what it'd do to some of the other families on the block if *they* got arguing about it, and take it from me they *would* argue."

"But something's *got* to be done," she persisted, looking up at him helplessly through reddened eyes while she dabbed her face with a crumpled ball which had once been a handkerchief.

"Well, we won't do anything right away," he said evasively. "We can let it simmer for a little while."

"And have that poor little boy suffering tortures!"

"Oh, he'll be all right, I guess. He's stood this thing for several years and he'll probably be able to stand it for a little while longer. Go ahead and mother him, if you want to, but you've got to promise me that you won't arouse the neighborhood or file any complaints with the Children's Society or do anything like that until I give you permission."

"But, Frank, I don't think you should force me into any such compromise with my best instincts. It isn't fair and——"

"Come now, Bessie—you know you said the other night that I was a nice man or words to that general effect. Just sort of remember that and go along with me."

There seemed to be an undercurrent of significance in what he said that was not altogether lost on Mrs. Ames.

"Oh, very well," she agreed. "Maybe you're right. I hope you are, but no matter what happens I sha'n't stop worrying about that poor little boy."

She had fresh fuel for her agitation the next day. Freddie didn't appear in the morning, and when noon and the lunch-hour had passed without any sign of him she sent Georgie out on a reconnoitering expedi-

tion. That young gentleman returned a few minutes later in a belligerent mood.

"I guess that old woman is doin' something to him again," he said. "Golly, I'd like to burn down her old house or have her arrested and sent to jail."

"What makes you think she's doing something to him, dear?" anxiously inquired his mother.

"Well, he wasn't around the yard or anything and I kept callin' for him like I usually do and there wasn't any answer, and then I kept callin' some more and she came to the up-stairs window and scowled at me something fierce and told me to go away or I'd be sorry, and then she slammed the window down and kept wavin' at me from the inside, sorta makin' pointin' motions toward our house. She's punishin' him again for something. I guess maybe she's got him locked up in the cellar in one of them coal-bins and is feedin' him bread and water. I guess maybe I'd better go around there after it gets dark and spy around some and find out."

"You mustn't do that, dear. We'll find out all about it in the morning. Freddie will tell us everything."

She was secretly disturbed, however, and the thought worried her all afternoon. When the new little neighbor failed to appear on the following day and Georgie had reported that the "old stepmother" had again scowled at him and waved him away, she was convinced that the time for drastic action had arrived. She braved her husband at the dinner-table.

"Promise or no promise, Frank," she declared, "something's got to be done and it's got to be done

right away—to-night. The neighborhood must be canvassed and a committee of volunteers must be organized to wait on that inhuman woman and threaten legal action if she doesn't stop her villainous treatment of that dear little fellow."

"Maybe promises don't go with you, but they do with me," replied her husband firmly. "You're not going to start any trouble around here about this thing if I have to forcibly detain you in the house. That isn't an empty threat, either. I'll do it—remember now."

She took fire with sudden anger.

"I'd like to see you do it. I'd just like to see you do it. You just dare lay a single hand on me and you'll wish you never——"

A ring at the door-bell cut short further discussion of the possibilities inherent in a carrying out of Frank Ames's threat. Silence fell on the dining-room. It was broken in a moment by the passage of Lulu through the hallway and then by the murmur of a man's voice at the front door. Lulu returned in a moment.

"There's a man there wants to see you-all," she said. "He said his name was Mr. Jefferson. He said likely you'd know who he was."

"Jefferson—Jefferson," repeated Mr. Ames. "I don't exactly—I can't place——"

"Why, that's little Freddie's name," remarked Mrs. Ames. "Do you suppose it could be his father?"

"Yes, perhaps it is," replied her husband, smiling grimly. "Are you sure you haven't been talking about this to any one?"

"Of course I haven't. How dare you insinuate such a thing?"

"Well, we've got to see him, I suppose. You'd better come along. He asked for both of us."

She followed him somewhat reluctantly into the hallway. Through the screen door they could see a tall, heavy-set man twisting about nervously. He seemed to be in great agitation and there was a deep frown on his forehead.

"Looks like blood on the moon to me," whispered Mr. Ames.

She silenced him with a nudge as they both moved toward the front door.

"Good evening," remarked Mr. Ames pleasantly. "Do you want to see us?"

"I certainly do," remarked the tall man gruffly. "I'll come in if you don't mind."

Mr. Ames hastened to open the screen door and tried to take the visitor's hat, but was not successful in this attempt at hospitality. The stranger drew it away and held it behind his back as he stalked into the living-room. He turned around and faced them.

"Look here," he said, glowering unpleasantly. "I've got a lot to say to you folks and if you don't mind I'll sit down."

Plainly the Ameses didn't seem to be able to mind about anything. Before either one of them could reply the visitor had flung himself into an easy chair. He regarded them belligerently as they found seats themselves.

"My name's Jefferson," he snapped. "I moved into

the next block about ten days ago. I guess you know one member of my family already."

"You mean little Freddie, I suppose," ventured Mrs. Ames in a dulcet voice. "Why, yes, I——"

"Yes, that's exactly who I mean," interrupted Mr. Jefferson. "This family seems to be pretty d—— well acquainted with that kid of mine—too d— well acquainted for his own good, if you ask me."

Mrs. Ames shrank back in her chair at the fierceness of this onslaught and looked pleadingly at her husband.

"Really," she murmured, "I don't propose to be talked to in this manner."

"My wife's right," said Frank Ames sharply, moved to protest by the necessities of convention, but not particularly liking the task because of some vague sense of the essential righteousness of the complaint which he felt his visitor was about to give voice to. "There's no occasion for profanity, my dear sir."

"Oh, there isn't, eh?" inquired Mr. Jefferson sarcastically. "I suppose you think I'd ought to come over here and hand you folks a lot of baby talk after the fine jam you've got that youngster of mine into."

"Jam?" echoed Mrs. Ames, straightening up and trying to be very dignified. "I'm sure I don't know what you mean. I'm not in the habit of getting people into jams, as you call them."

"No?" Mr. Jefferson's tone was sneering now. "Well, you've got my kid sick and pretty nearly at death's door if that's any satisfaction to you. I guess that's a jam if there ever was one."

"Sick and at death's door," she echoed incredulously.

"Why, you're out of your mind. Frank, are you going to sit there and let me be insulted right before your eyes?"

"Just a minute now, Bessie," replied her husband. "Let's hear what Mr. Jefferson has got to say. Give him a chance. He's a little excited, I guess."

"You bet I'm excited," broke in their visitor. "Ive been worried sick myself for two days. It was only a little while ago that we wormed it all out of him."

"Wormed what out of him, if I may be permitted to politely inquire?" questioned Mrs. Ames stiffly.

"Why, got him to confess where he'd been getting all this stuff to eat that threw him back into his old sickness. He wouldn't tell us yesterday. We worked on him all day—my wife and I taking turns. The doctor said he'd have to know exactly what he'd eaten. His mother got around his stubbornness about an hour ago—I don't know exactly how she did it—and he told her that you'd been feeding him everything under the sun that he shouldn't eat, for the last four or five days, just literally 'tonning' it into him."

"I see," said Mr. Ames evenly. "Just what *is* your boy's sickness?"

"It is a darned serious trouble—acidosis or something like that, I think the doctor calls it. We thought we were going to lose him when he first got it about six months ago. The doctor put him on a strict diet—no sweets and no fresh fruit. Now we find that he's been eating nothing *but* those things over here—puddings and ice-cream and cake and peaches and so on. The doctor says he *thinks* he'll be able to pull him

through, but that it's going to be another long siege. You can't exactly blame me for getting excited, can you?"

"Most assuredly not," replied Mr. Ames, darting a glance at his wife, who was trying to master her conflicting emotions and who was not making much of a success of the undertaking. "You mustn't be too hard on Mrs. Ames, however. I'm afraid the youngster played on her sympathies."

"How's that?" inquired their visitor.

Mr. Ames coughed nervously to hide a momentary embarrassment.

"Why, he—he—well, he told her something about not getting enough to eat at home and—"

Mr. Jefferson gave alarming symptoms of an approaching attack of apoplexy.

"Not getting enough to eat at home!" he spluttered. "And you believed any such cock-and-bull story as that! I guess probably you *wanted* to believe it. Why, if there's any boy in this neighborhood who gets better and more food than my Freddie I'd like to have him trotted out Yes, sir, I'd just like to take a look at that exhibit, I would. What other stuff and nonsense has he been filling you up on?"

Mr. Ames hesitated and gazed at his wife. She shook her head quickly, a signal which attracted the attention of Mr. Jefferson.

"Come on," said that gentleman. "Let's hear it all. What else did he say?"

"Well," resumed Mr. Ames, "it's rather a delicate subject. I believe he intimated that he wasn't being treated exactly right at home."

"By who? By *me?*" Mr. Jefferson fairly bellowed the questions.

"Oh, no—by his—well, if you must know, by his stepmother."

"By his *stepmother?*" echoed Mr. Jefferson. "He hasn't got any stepmother."

"He hasn't?" gasped Mrs. Ames. "But I thought he——"

"You seem to have thought a lot, Madam," cut in Mr. Jefferson. "After to-night you can direct your thoughts into some other channel and leave my family out of them. Stepmother! Wait till his mother hears that one! I guess I hadn't better tell her until she gets through worrying about his being so sick. Cruel stepmother, eh? That's a new dodge. Why, if ever there was a woman who was a fool about a kid it's that wife of mine. Just coddles him to death—yes, sir—just literally and absolutely coddles him to death."

Mr. Ames refrained from looking at his wife. He felt that it wouldn't be quite fair. "We're both very sorry," he said quietly. "I'm sure you'll realize that Mrs. Ames had some justification for what she did.

Mr. Jefferson stood up and shook his tall frame.

"Nothing of the sort," he remarked. "I can't see that view-point at all. I'd think twice before I'd believe the tittle-tattle of a nine-year-old boy, and I'm pretty blamed certain that I'd think *several* times before I'd feed a neighbor's child a lot of sweet truck between meals. In the future if you folks feel that you've got any charity to dispense or wrongs to right just look up some other victims and leave my house-

hold alone. That's all I've got to say. That's all right. Never mind. I'll find my way out."

He lumbered out into the hall before Mr. Ames could precede him, and in another moment the screen door slammed noisily on his departing figure.

"And that's that," was Mr. Ames's terse comment as he turned to his wife.

"Now, don't be horrid, Frank," murmured that gentlewoman. "It's all over and I'm sorry and I've had my lesson and I won't do it again. You were right. I'm going to try to be a follower of Nietzsche from now on. You know what his motto was—'Be hard.' Well, that's me. From now on I'm going to be the hardest-hearted person in Ashford. You just watch me."

Somehow this notion tickled Frank Ames beyond the limits of verbal expression. He contented himself with laughing immoderately.

Little Freddie Jefferson was convalescent again and off to the mountains with his mother for recuperation before Mrs. Ames felt that the psychological moment had arrived for the further discussion of a subject close to her heart. Her husband was in a particularly genial mood that morning and had been giving outward expression to his inner joy of soul ever since he arose. Song had filled the bathroom during his ablutions and he had come bounding down the stairs to breakfast with the zestful enthusiasm of a small boy on the morning of a picnic. Mrs. Ames felt that the opportunity was too utterly perfect to be overlooked.

"Frank," she said quietly as he drained his second cup of coffee, "there's something I haven't talked about

for weeks. I thought it best—all things considered. It's that French seal coat that you promised me. You were going to ask your friend about prices. Don't you remember?"

"Oh, yes," replied her husband casually. "Sure. I'll see about it to-day. I'm glad you reminded me. I'll have some news for you to-night.

She was waiting for him on the porch when he returned at the end of the warm September afternoon.

"Did you find out anything about the coat?" she inquired anxiously.

"The coat? Oh, you mean what we talked about this morning. Well—to be frank, I didn't."

"You didn't? But you promised me that you would."

"I know, but I got thinking things over this afternoon and I decided that there was a better way of spending that money than on any fur coat. I'm sure you'll agree with me, too, that it *was* a better way."

"Frank Ames, what have you done?" Her tone was tense, with a sense of impending disaster.

"I didn't do anything except pay a bill we owed. Here it is."

She took a folded sheet of paper from him and opened it. She read it and was bewildered for a moment.

DR. DOUGLAS MARTIN
432 Sedgwick Avenue
For professional services rendered— $192.00
Received payment
DOUGLAS MARTIN.

"What *is* this?" she inquired, still puzzled.

"It's dear little Freddie's doctor bill. If ever any-

body owed anything we owed that, or, to be exact, *you* owed it. And now you've paid it. Aren't you glad?"

She stared at him for a moment blankly and then sought the refuge of the house. He made no attempt to follow her in, but he listened at the screen door and there came to him from the living-room the murmur of muffled sobs.

"Remember Nietzsche, my dear," he called out. "Be hard, be hard.' "

A second or two passed, and then the living-room door crashed shut with a reverberating slam. Mr. Ames smiled sardonically.

QUESTIONS

How old is Georgie? Freddie?

Show from the opening paragraphs that Mrs. Ames is a tactician.

Where did you first suspect Freddie was not so innocent as he looked?

Why did he exact the "cross your heart" promise?

Tell about the food Mrs. Ames pressed upon the hungry child.

What did Georgie mean by "ravelous"?

What did Georgie think of school teachers?

Relate the coal-shoveling episode.

How nearly right was Mr. Ames in saying our duty is to mind our own business?

What did Mrs. Ames wish to do when Freddie failed to appear?

What did you suspect when Mr. Jefferson called?

What was the state of affairs in the Jefferson household?

Why did Mrs. Ames not get her coat? Was she "served right" for interfering? Are you sorry for her?

Write a dialogue between Georgie and Freddie when they first meet after Freddie's recovery.

MORE STORIES ABOUT CHILDREN

Ralph Henry Barbour, *The Year's Best Stories for Boys,* 1927 (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

Irvin S. Cobb, "Little Short Pantsleroy" (*Cosmopolitan,* July, 1924).

Stephen Crane, "The Fight," "Lynx Hunting" (*Whilomville Stories,* Harper & Bros.).

Richard Harding Davis, "Gallegher" (Volume title, Chas. Scribner's Sons); "The Boy Scout" (*Somewhere in France* (Chas. Scribner's Sons).

Griffith O. Ellis, *American Boy Stories* (Doubleday).

Mary Wilkins Freeman, "Little-Girl-Afraid-of-a-Dog" (*The Best Stories of Mary Wilkins Freeman,* Harper & Bros.).

Elinore Cowan Stone, "Lonch for a Lady" (*The Laughingest Lady,* D. Appleton & Co.).

William Allen White, "The King of Boyville" (*The Real Issue,* Macmillan Co.).

See also page 221 for stories about children.

THE KISKIS

BY

MAY VONTVER

May Vontver

The author of "The Kiskis" writes a brief autobiography, which she permits us to publish:

"Once upon a time I was the fourth of nine children growing up in a shoemaker's cottage in Sweden. My father lacked all sense of personal or financial obligation, but he had a gift for narrative and he delighted in beautiful phraseology. Unfortunately, he also possessed a difficult and, to his children, terrifying artistic temperament; we feared him too much to love him. His indifference to money obligations resulted in my own desperate worry over his affairs. I knew that before I was born he had employed a dozen workmen and lived in a large house; now mother raked hay in our landlord's meadows and tied grain-bundles in his harvest field to keep a roof over our heads. The hard labor did not seem to trouble her, but I hated our poverty and grieved over her servitude.

That the brood of us were kept from starvation was due largely to the industry and unselfishness of our brother John. Long before I could remember, father had obtained the government contract for carrying the mail between two postal stations some fifteen miles apart, and upon his oldest son he laid the burden of the job. So small was John when he began going the rounds that the patrons along the route said all they could see of their new mail-man was two little legs under the enormous mail pouch. Between trips John toiled early and late at the cobbler's bench, indifferent to father's nagging, concentrating upon the completion of the work and upon its delivery on the date set. One nightmarish recollection of my childhood is that of discovering my adored big brother lying on the floor beside the work bench apparently lifeless. Over a half-pegged shoe he had fainted from sheer exhaustion.

At the age of twenty, John decided to emigrate to America. I was twelve; I had completed grammar school; I had to leave home to make my own living. Since my only prospect was to take service somewhere as a nurse girl, I begged to go with John. Mother let me have my way, and devoted as much time as possible to getting ready suitable outfits of clothing for us. Such of our garments as were considered fit to be taken along were washed, ironed, and mended. One by one, as the articles were finished, she packed them into the wooden chest that was to be our trunk. She bought new materials, too, from which she fashioned good substantial underclothing; she also made for John several white shirts and for me a new dress.

Mother worked at the sewing mostly in the evenings when father and the little ones had gone to bed. About all that I could do to help with the sewing was to overcast seams and pull basting threads. Nevertheless I treasured those evenings of intimacy with mother, for over the whir of the sewing machine I would plan with her the wonders I would accomplish after I got to America. I would pay off all father's debts and buy blue velvet suits for my little brothers; for mother I'd buy a home and furnish it with everything her heart might desire. I sensed dimly that nothing I might do would compensate her for losing John, but my faith in my own future was not to be quenched.

On the day of departure mother bore up bravely; yet, child that I was, I had to hide my eyes from the sight of her final leave-taking of her son. My own sorrow at parting was wonderfully lightened by a satchel full of food that mother had provided to supplement our steerage fare. I, who seldom had butter on my bread, reveled in the prospect of setting teeth in the delicious sandwiches, the hard-boiled eggs, and the spicy coffee cakes that were mother's last loving service to us. The other children had looked on longingly as these choice delicacies were cooked and packed away with never a nibble for them. An example of the irony of life is that this food, prepared with God knows how much self-denial and sacrifice, was eventually consigned to

the waters of Boston Harbor, brother and I having been too seasick to eat more than a mere fraction of the contents of the food satchel.

My dreams of sudden wealth have not materialized. True, father's debts have been paid; but his life insurance, kept up by brother John, accomplished that feat. By the time I was able to spend money on velvet suits for boys my little brothers were grown men. But when at seventeen I began teaching school, I used my first savings to buy a home for mother; and when I was twenty-one the final payments on that house were completed.

During my thirty-seven years I have loved literature. Poor as we were at home we had plenty of books and newspapers and periodicals. Father craved reading matter. And mother in her more worldly moments told the stories that were in the school books when she was a little girl; she could recite ancient lays of stirring adventures and, at times, even be persuaded to sing the love ballads of her girlhood. The one I always called for was about a youth who climbed an Alpine peak for the edelweiss his sweetheart demanded, only to fall into a yawning abyss when the flower was safely plucked.

I cannot say just when I learned to read, but I know that there was a period during which I could not read, for I distinctly remember my suspicion that my elders made up the fascinating tales that proceeded from their mouths when they held a book or paper before them. I could make up stories that way, myself, especially when there were pictures; so, undoubtedly, that was all there was to reading. After I could read, I found in poetry the greatest appeal. In my earliest years, to read a poem was almost the equivalent of memorizing it. So much did this first poetry become a part of me that now after some thirty years or more I can still recite the martial ballads of Runeberg, the historical verse of Snoilsky, and—almost in its entirety—my best beloved Viking epic, *Frithiof's Saga*.

I was not satisfied to consume literature, however; I must create it, too. At seven I composed what I called poetry;

at nine I began writing love stories. The latter were invariably tragic. So much ridicule did they arouse among my brothers and sisters, I finally hid my masterpieces. They were eventually found; good hiding places are scarce where there are nine children; the discoverers would gleefully collect an audience and with gusto deridingly read aloud my romances, while I wept, stormed, and fought to tear my creations from their clutches.

The first person to appreciate my literary efforts was the English teacher in a Nebraska high school, to which I went when I was fifteen and sixteen. When she published my compositions in the school paper, my elation knew no bounds. It was plain to me then that I was destined for a literary career! I would sit down to write, some day, and without effort would create. The trouble then was that I had to scrub, wash, iron, and cook to earn my board while going to school; there never was an opportune moment for beginning the masterpiece that I contemplated. I had to sew for myself, too; for though I could work for room and board, I had no means of earning clothing. An aunt, very large and unwieldy, gave me her cast-off clothes. Shoddy they were to start with, and as I have never developed skill at dressmaking, the alterations I effected must have been ludicrous. Yet my dresses caused me less worry than my footwear, for when shoes wore out new ones had to be bought. I couldn't take two old pairs and piece them together to make a new pair. One afternoon I had to absent myself from classes while with grocery parcel string I sewed the soles back into my only pair of shoes. When I went home to lunch at noon, both soles flapped loose.

I was not ostracized. The boys and girls soon discovered that I could work their algebra problems in an emergency, that I could elucidate the Latin Grammar for them, and accurately translate Cæsar's *Commentaries*. What did I care that I wasn't asked to parties when I knew that no one in the whole school—not even among the seniors—was getting as high marks as I in English Composition? My spoken English was faulty and peculiar. At this time I had but

three years' acquaintance with my new language, and the pronunciation, particularly *g's, z's* and *th's* troubled me considerably.

For ten years I taught school; at twenty-eight I married. I have continued to work [Mrs. Vontver is Superintendent of Education in a Montana County] because my husband and I can thus each year make something above and beyond a mere living. By the time I am a nice fat old lady in a rocker and he a little old man bent with rheumatism, we shall—so we hope—be done at last with poverty. My hopes and ambitions, such as they are after the years, center about the never quite dormant desire to write."

THE KISKIS [1]

HADN'T you better eat in the house today? It is cold outside," the teacher suggested.

Pretending not to hear her the three Kiskis slipped silently through the door with their double-handled Bull Durham tin can. They stood in a knot on the south side of the schoolhouse and ate from the one tin. From her desk Miss Smith observed that they now and then put one bare foot over the other to warm it. This was the second time they had disregarded her invitation to eat in the house with the others. The rest of the children had drawn their seats into a circle about the stove and begun to eat.

Teddy Kirk at last decided to enlighten the teacher: "They have only bread in their lunch-pail. That's why they won't eat with us."

Miss Smith made no reply. She suspected that the lunches of the group around the stove weren't very sumptuous either. She knew hers wasn't. The people with whom she boarded were homesteaders, too.

"What about these Kiskis? Who are they?" she asked Mr. Clark that evening at supper.

"The Kiskis?—Oh, they took up their claim here last fall. They are pretty hard up. They have only one horse. Kiski hauled out all the lumber for his shack and barn with it. Thirty miles it is to Hilger. I was hauling wheat then and I used to pass him on the

[1] *The Frontier,* March, 1929. Reprinted by permission of the author.

road walking beside the load and pushing when it was uphill."

Miss Smith smiled crookedly. One horse in a country where four- or six-horse teams were the rule was somewhat ludicrous. It was pathetic, too.

"Now, now! you needn't look that way! Kiski broke ten acres with that horse of his last spring. Got the ground in shape and got it seeded, too. The horse pulled and the old man pushed and, by golly, they got it in." There was respect, even admiration, in his voice.

"They have eight children, though," Mrs. Clark broke in. "The two oldest girls are doing housework in Lewistown."

Eight children. That meant three at home younger than the ones at school.

"Have they any cows?"

"One, but she's dry now. It's pretty hard for them."

Miss Smith decided not to urge the Kiskis again to eat in the schoolhouse.

The Kiskis in school were painfully shy. Rudolph, the oldest, going on eleven, hid his timidity under a sullen demeanor. Once in a while, however, he could be beguiled to join in a game of "Pum-Pum-Pull-Away" or horse-shoe pitching. He was a good pitcher. Margaret, next in age, expressed her shyness in wistfulness. Johnny, barely six, refused to speak. Never would he answer a question in class. Never a word did he utter to the children on the playground. He might, now and then, have made remarks to his sister and brother in Bohemian, but, if so, he wasn't ever caught making them. Yet, he was by nature a happy

child. When anything comical happened in school or something funny was said he would laugh out loud with an especially merry, infectious laugh. It was plain that he observed and understood more than his usual behavior indicated. The teacher, mindful of her psychology texts, tried vainly again and again to utilize these occasions of self-forgetfulness by surprising him into speech.

At the beginning of the term in September every child had come to school barefoot. As the season advanced the other pupils, family by family, donned their footwear, but the Kiskis continued to arrive barefoot, although it was now late in October and getting cold.

"Why don't you wear your shoes?" "Aren't your feet cold?" "Haven't you got any shoes?"

With their bare goose-fleshed feet Rudolph, Margaret, and Johnny picked their way between the prickly pear cactus without answering. But it was plainly to be seen that more and more the continued questioning and the curious staring at their bare legs and feet embarrassed them.

Gradually the weather grew colder. The cracked gumbo froze to cement. Still the Kiskis came barefoot to school.

Then the first snow fell. It was but a thin film. Disks of cactus and tufts of bunch grass stuck through. Yet it was heavy enough to show plainly the tracks of the Kiski children's naked feet.

One day when John and Margaret had planned to reach school just as the bell rang, to escape the inevitable and dreaded comments of the others, they miscalculated the time. All the children were on the

porch watching as the Kiskis walked, heads down, toward the schoolhouse.

"I don't see how you can stand it!"

It was the irrepressible Teddy Kirk speaking. The others left their remarks unspoken, for this time Margaret answered and there was defiance in her indistinct mumble.

"We like to go to school barefooted. We get there quicker that way."

She did not tell them that they had not come barefoot all the way; that at the hill nearest the schoolhouse they had stopped and undone the gunnysacks wrapped about their feet and legs and hidden them under a rock. When they went home they would put them on again, for no one else went their way.

But little Johnny wasn't so good at keeping his mouth shut at home as he was at school. He didn't know better than to tell that none of them had worn the gunnysacks *all* the day. Fortunately or unfortunately for the children, a little Old World discipline was exercised upon them. The next day they wore the gunnysacks *all* the way to school. They wore them all day, too.

Their schoolmates and their teacher after a while grew used to seeing the coarse string-bound sacks, but the Kiskis never became used to wearing them. No longer did Rudolph take part in the games. Margaret grew sullen and unapproachable like him. On pleasant days when the girls strolled by two's and three's with their arms about each other Margaret stood alone in a corner against the wall. Sometimes they invited her to come with them; but she never answered. All re-

cess she would stand there just looking at the ground. At last the girls quit asking her. Margaret made believe that she did not notice either them or their neglect. No longer did Johnny's laughter ring out in unexpected places. All three were creeping farther and farther into their shells of silence. Finally Rudolph ran away. After two days his father located him in a barn, where he had been hiding in the hayloft. Unless he had milked the cows in that barn he had had nothing to eat during his absence. He was brought home and made to go back to school.

In November the threshers came to Kiski's place. Because the field there was so small, they made that threshing their last job before pulling out of the country. Mr. Kiski hauled the wheat to Hilger and bought shoes and stockings for the children who attended school.

Other school children, the smaller ones especially, always proudly displayed their new shoes at school the first day they wore them. Several times that fall the teacher had been asked to admire the pretty perforations on the toes, the shiny buttons, or the colored tassels on the strings. But the Kiskis were almost as painfully conscious of their new footwear as they had been of the gunnysacks. They arrived with faces darkly flushed, sat down immediately, and pushed their feet far back under their seats. The teacher had hoped that to be shod like others would gradually restore their former morale. She was mistaken.

Kiski's cow had come fresh. The children had butter on their bread now. Miss Smith heard about it. She had occasion to pass by the children as they stood

eating and she saw that it was really true about the butter. Yet the Kiskis would not eat with the others. They continued to go out at noontime. If the weather was severely cold or stormy they ate in the hall, quickly. Then they would come in, without looking at anyone, and go to their seats.

As the four-month term drew to a close Miss Smith's heart ached for the Kiskis. They had not learned a great deal from their books; she had been unable to supply them with the many bare necessities they lacked; and their own keen realization of being different had made their attendance a torture. They were so unapproachable, too, that she had found little opportunity to show them her love and sympathy. She had had but one chance that she knew of to do so, and she was grateful for that one occasion, though it had not affected the Kiskis' silence nor changed in the least their subsequent conduct.

It came about in this way. Miss Smith had been late to school. There had been a heavy snowfall in the night and she had not had previous experience in breaking trail. If she had not been new in the country she would have known that wading three miles through knee-deep snow takes considerable time. When at length she reached the schoolhouse the Kiskis were there standing about the cold stove. All were crying—even Rudolph! They had been too miserably cold and numb to attempt building a fire for themselves. As soon as Miss Smith had the fire crackling merrily she took Johnny in her lap, undid the new shoes and stockings, and began to chafe the cold little feet. And when his crying still persisted she began telling "The

Tarbaby." She had noticed early in the term that he particularly relished this tale. And sure enough, at the very first "Bim" of Brother Rabbit's paw on the tarbaby's cheek Johnny laughed through his tears right out loud—something he had not done for a month. Miss Smith decided to tell stories all day.

She felt justified in entertaining the Kiskis this way, for they were the only pupils who braved the roads that morning. She had a great fund of fairy tales and folk tales and a gift for telling them; also she had that day an audience whom professional entertainers might well have envied her. Johnny leaned against her knee. She put one arm about Margaret, who stood on one side, and would have put the other about Rudolph on the opposite side had she dared. He was a boy and eleven. With shining eyes and open mouths they drank in "Cinderella," "Hansel and Gretel," "Snow-White," "The Hag and the Bag," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Colter's Race for His Life," and "Mowgli."

Only to replenish the fire and melt snow for drinking water did Miss Smith stop. Her audience was too timid and self-effacing to make any spoken requests, but after each happy ending their eyes clamored, "More, more!"

At noon the water on the top of the stove was boiling. Miss Smith put condensed milk and a little sugar in it and brought the hot drink to the Kiskis in the hall. For out there they had gone as soon as she announced that it was dinner time. They accepted with smiles and drank every drop, but without a word. Miss Smith, too, stayed in the hall to drink her tea with them. Then the story-telling went on again, until

three o'clock in the afternoon, when the teacher bundled them up in some of her own wraps and sent them home.

Going back to her boarding-place, stepping carefully in the tracks she had made in the morning, Miss Smith reflected that should the county superintendent ever learn of her program for the day she would be in for a reprimand. In such a case, she thought, she would defend herself on the grounds that since formalized education had failed noticeably to benefit the Kiskis, it was not altogether unreasonable to try a little informality. Anyhow, she was fiercely glad that the Kiskis' school-term would include one happy day.

It was with sorrow and regret that Miss Smith made her way to the schoolhouse on the last day of the session. With the other pupils she had accomplished something in the way of progress, but the Kiskis she would leave embittered, shyer, and more isolated than she had found them.

She had just reached the shack and barely had time to pile the kindling into the stove when she was aware of subdued noises in the hall. She thought absently that it was unusually early for the children to be arriving. When the door opened a crack to allow someone to peer in, she began to wonder what was going on. Then with a rush the three Kiskis were at the stove.

With her unmittened purple hands Margaret was thrusting something towards her. It was a small, square candy-box of pristine whiteness. A wide pink silk ribbon ran obliquely across the top and was looped into a generous bow in the center.

"We brought you a present, Teacher," Margaret began breathlessly.

This time, however, Rudolph did not want his sister to be the chief spokesman. "There are fourteen pieces, Teacher. Two have something shiny around them. We looked."

And before Miss Smith had time to recover from this surprise a miracle came to pass. Johnny spoke, and he spoke in English!

"It is to eat, Teacher. It is candy."

Miss Smith said, "Thank you, children. It was very good of you to give me this."

She shook the stove-grate vigorously. The ashes flew into her eyes. She had to wipe them.

"Open it, Teacher. Open it now."

The teacher took the box to her desk. The Kiskis followed and stood about her watching. There really were fourteen pieces. Johnny pointed out the two with tinfoil. Each of the fourteen reposed daintily in a little cup of pleated paper. It was a wonderful box and Miss Smith was lavish with praises of it.

She held the opened box out to them. "Take one," she invited; and as they made no motion, "Please, do."

The three black heads shook vigorously. Johnny's hands flew behind him.

"They are for you, Teacher," they protested. "You eat."

But Miss Smith couldn't eat just then. More than anything else she wanted to see the Kiskis enjoy the contents of that box themselves. She felt small and unworthy to accept their astounding offering. But again, how could she refuse to accept it and kill cruelly

their joy in giving? It was a gift not to be lightly disposed of. An inspiration came.

"Would you care if I shared it? There is enough so that every child in school can have a piece. Johnny could pass it around when they all get here. Would you like that?"

"Yes, yes, yes." Their black eyes shone.

Johnny carried the box to his seat and sat down with it. Rudolph and Margaret hovered about the teacher, happy, eager, excited. Rudolph explained how it all came about.

"Anna came home from Lewistown last night. Margaret and I wrote her a letter once and told her to buy us a present for you. We were afraid she'd forget, but she didn't."

Teddy Kirk was coming. Rudolph and Margaret saw him and ran out on the porch.

"We brought candy for teacher. You are going to get some, too. Johnny has it. Come and see!"

Teddy was too taken aback to say anything. They led him in easily. The pieces were counted again.

Other children came. Rudolph and Margaret met each new arrival before he got to the door. To each in turn Johnny exhibited the box and its contents. He did not mind being the center of attraction now. He made use of his new-found speech, too.

"I am going to pass it around," he told them. "When the bell rings I am going to pass it."

Rudolph and Margaret talked. They chattered. The other children kept still. They had to get used to these new Kiskis.

When the bell rang, a few minutes before time.

everybody was in his seat. Johnny got up and passed the candy. Teacher saw to it that he got one of the shiny pieces.

Candy—candy of any kind—was a rare treat to everybody. These chocolates were very fresh. They had soft creamy centers. Some had cherries in them. The children had not known that sweets like these existed.

They took their time about the licking and snibbling. Delights such as these had to be given their just dues. There was no needless or premature swallowing. And to think that the Kiskis had provided it! The Kiskis were assuming importance.

The Kiskis ate candy, too. They beamed on everybody. They had had something to give and everybody thought their gift wonderful.

The sun shone. At recess the girls again walked about by two's and three's. Margaret walked with them. Teddy presented Rudolph with one of his horse-shoes, and Rudolph began to pitch it. Edward, the other first-grader, found a string in his overall pocket and promptly invited Johnny to be his horse. Johnny accepted.

He trotted; he paced; he neighed surprisingly like a horse. Then he kicked at the traces a while.

"You should say 'Cut it out,'" he instructed his driver.

That noon the Kiskis ate lunch in the schoolhouse.

QUESTIONS

Define the term, *homesteaders*.

Is there a clue to the setting of this story? Look up the map of Montana.

Why did the Kiskis not eat with the other children?

Tell what you know of the Kiskis after reading the first page or so.

Why did the children hide the gunnysacks? Why did Rudolph run away?

How did the children behave when they had new shoes? Butter for their bread?

Tell what happened after the snow.

Do you know all the stories Miss Smith told the children?

Have you ever known a child to whom a box of candy meant as much as it meant to every one of the Kiskis?

When and why were their tongues loosened?

Mrs. Vontver says that she wrote this story in response to the request, "Think of some incident or person that has profoundly touched your heart. Tell the incident or portray the character through any medium you choose—short story, play, poetry, or novel—but whatever you do with your material, handle it with sincerity." She recalled as one of the greatest gifts she ever received the box of candy given her by the destitute homesteader children, the Kiskis. They are, then, "no creatures of imagination; they are real people who once lived in the territory now comprising Petroleum County, and the whole situation portrayed is true both in detail and in whole."

Has the author made the details *seem* true? Do they sound sincere?

Mrs. Vontver says, further, that her duties as County Superintendent of Schools occasionally take her over the territory where the schoolhouse of the story once stood. The Clarks still live there; some of the pupils are grown, married, and settled in the community; but the Kiskis are gone, no one seems to know where. "The Kiskis, you see, always kept very much to themselves."

Has she made you feel that the Kiskis were lonely?

Write a story telling why the Kiskis went away, or write a story about them in their new home.

STORIES OF PIONEERS

Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Hamlin Garland, "The Lion's Paw" (*A Book of Short Stories,* edited by Blanche Colton Williams, Appleton & Co.). See also Hamlin Garland's collections, *Main Travelled Roads, Other Main Travelled Roads,* and *Prairie Folks* (Harper & Bros.).

Bret Harte, "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "Tennessee's Partner," "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" (*The Luck of Roaring Camp,* Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Jack London, "Love of Life" (Volume title, Macmillan Co.); "To Build a Fire" (*Lost Face,* Macmillan Co.).

Harriet Prescott Spofford, "Circumstance" (*Century Readings in the American Short Story,* Pattee, Century Co.).

Ralph Stock, "The Mangrove Man" (*Uncharted Waters,* Doubleday).

Frances Gilchrist Wood, "Turkey Red" (*O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* 1919, Doubleday).

THE FIGHTING HEART

BY

GEORGE F. WORTS

George F. Worts

George F. Worts was born at Toledo, Ohio, March 16, 1892. He studied wireless telegraphy and, at the age of eighteen, found a post as operator on the Great Lakes. There he remained until 1914, when he left to study at Columbia University. In 1915 he became associate editor of *Modern Mechanics,* and subsequently edited a number of motion picture magazines. Interested in sports and commerce he has written, for various periodicals, articles and stories connected with these subjects.

THE FIGHTING HEART[1]

"YOU have either got it or you have not got it," said Paddy Malone. "It is like blue eyes or personality. It is either in you or it is left out of you. But in one way it is not like blue eyes or personality. A glance will *not* tell you whether you have got it or not —and there is no scientific machine for finding out either.

"Sometimes a boy gets started wrong, like Young Stribling, and is burned out before he finds out. Sometimes it doesn't show itself till he is well along—like Mike McTigue. Sometimes a willing boy stays on and on, piling up K.O.'s—for the other fellow—till he is punch-drunk and goofy, a mental misfit for the rest of his days. But most boys, a fair 90 per cent of them, find out they haven't the fighting heart and show how smart they are by going back to the laundry, the soda fountain or the business end of the old truck."

"How can I find out if I've got it?" Ruby Barry wanted to know.

"It is easy to tell," was his trainer's answer, "whether a boy is a smart fighter or a palooka, but the only way of finding out whether you have a fighter's heart or not is—you just find out. You just know. And I think you are going to know tonight. You are

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[1] *Collier's*, October 15, 1927. Reprinted by permission of the author.

up against a tough egg, Ruby—a rough-house artist. You want to go out and fight him with everything you got."

"I'm going to," said Ruby.

Paddy Malone looked him over with approval. Ruby Barry was a nice, clean kid. He was a fighter of the modern mold: good-looking, intelligent, with wide-set blue eyes and a friendly grin. His hair was the color of canned tomatoes, which accounted for his nickname.

They were waiting in the dressing-room for the preliminaries to come to an end. Ruby's hands were taped and bandaged. He was so restless he was constantly jumping up and sitting down again. Tonight would usher him into the sporting world as a main-bout participant. For two long years he had been fighting in preliminaries.

Now, after two years of hard schooling, he was ready. If he "took" Kid Prentice tonight, he would have a chance at Cannon-ball Lewis. And if he won over Cannon-ball, he would be only five or six fights away from the championship of his division. If he lost tonight's fight, he would lose all he had gained—and more.

His recent improvement had been noted by the sport writers. He had learned more and more ring strategy. But did he have the most important thing of all? Could he fight on and on when there wasn't any fight left in him? Could he take punishment beyond human endurance and fight harder than ever? If he could, he might some day become a champion. If he couldn't he might as well quit after tonight.

Someone shouted into the dressing-room: "All ready for the main bout!"

Ruby Barry went into the stadium. The crowd roared as he came up the aisle toward the square of canvas under the glaring pinkish-white lights. He was popular. The crowd always rooted for Ruby because he always gave them their money's worth.

He wondered, as he sat down on the stool in his corner and listened to the brisk chatter of telegraph sounders, if he would ever climb through the ropes again for a star bout. It was what he had been working for so hard these past two years—and it was worth working for. The deference! The excitement! The formality of putting on brand-new gloves! The tenseness of the crowd!

Another roar went up as Kid Prentice came through the ropes in the opposite corner. He was a tough-looking egg, all right, with a flattened nose, a broad jaw, a closely cropped head and large red ears. He elaborately ignored Ruby.

The referee called them into the center of the ring. Both fighters listened to him and looked intently at the canvas. . . . Clean breaks. . . . Give us some action, boys. . . .

Ruby returned to his corner, and the graveyard voice of Paddy Malone floated up to him: "Watch out for his left hook, Ruby."

Clang!

They came out with a rush, to meet in a flashing confusion of driving gloves. They clinched. When the referee separated them, Ruby swung a hard right to Kid Prentice's heart, and Kid Prentice swung a

mild uppercut to Ruby's chin. In a fury they exchanged jabs, swings, hooks and uppercuts, but most of these blows were blocked.

The crowd didn't know that. The crowd, stung to its feet by the smashing impact of leather on flesh, was roaring for a knockout.

Kid Prentice fought his way into a clinch. He rubbed a three-day stubble into Ruby's cheek, butted him under the chin, trod on his toes and tried to push him off balance. They were rough tricks: it was going to be a rough fight. Ruby realized that Prentice was trying to make him mad; trying to get his goat. Get a redhead mad and you had him licked. Well, they weren't going to get this redhead mad!

The referee pried them apart. Kid Prentice swung a right to Ruby's solar plexus, which Ruby blocked with his elbows. Ruby threw every muscle in his back behind a left hook to Kid Prentice's heart. Kid Prentice rolled with it, spun about and sent a slashing right uppercut along Ruby's chin.

Ruby wondered how long this could last. Kid Prentice was trying to finish him in one round. Again they clashed, toe to toe, punching, jabbing, swinging.

Clang!

Ruby dropped down on his stool dazedly. He heard Paddy Malone murmuring, "Don't let that guy get your goat, kid. You're doin' great. Relax, kid, relax."

Ruby relaxed. Paddy was massaging his medulla and his solar plexus with two marvelously unrelated hands. Across the ring Kid Prentice was glaring at him. Yes; it was going to be a fight.

At the bell the two fighters came rushing out, to

meet near Kid Prentice's corner, because Ruby was traveling the faster.

Ruby saw the blow coming. It seemed to him that he had seen it coming from the very beginning of the fight. It was a right cross, shooting straight at his chin. He couldn't block it. He couldn't duck or shift quickly enough to roll with it.

The next thing he remembered was a vast roaring. Much later he recalled the bitterness of disappointment the instant before the wet glove struck his chin. He didn't have a fighting heart.

When the various departments of his brain were once more coördinating, Ruby was lying on his back in his dressing-room and Paddy Malone was giving him a rub-down. Paddy Malone was rubbing him down and carrying on a spirited monologue.

" . . . And after you polish off the Cannon-ball—" he was saying.

Ruby sat up and stared at his trainer.

"What chance have I got for a match with the Cannon-ball when Prentice stops me in two rounds with a K. O.?"

"Are you kidding me?" growled Paddy Malone.

"How did I get here?" demanded Ruby Barry.

"I might have suspected it," said Paddy Malone. "You walked here, all alone—acting queer, I'll admit. You were out on your feet after he sent over that right cross to your chin."

Ruby looked bewildered. "Didn't it knock me out?"

"It knocked you against the ropes and you came back at him like a starved leopard!"

"But I don't remember it. I—I was out."

"Out—on your feet, kid. I've seen it happen in the ring three times before. You don't remember knocking him down three times in the third, twice in the fourth and out in the fifth, do you?"

"I knocked *him* out?"

"Of course you don't remember, Ruby. You weren't doing the fighting. It was your heart that was doing the fighting."

QUESTIONS AND OTHER STORIES TO READ

What is a K.O.? A palooka?

Where and how is the fighting heart described?

Do you like Ruby? Kid? Why?

What is a left hook? A right uppercut?

Tell how Ruby's heart won the battle for him.

Write a story of a fight you have seen. Perhaps you have seen only a chicken fight or dog fight; perhaps you have had seats in the grand stand when professional boxers met. In any event, try to picture the conflict as you remember it.

Read Jack London's *The Game,* and tell what happened to bring tragedy to the hero.

Read Will Levington Comfort's "Back of the Yards," which you will find in Frederick Stuart Greene's volume entitled *The Grim Thirteen* (Dodd, Mead & Co.), and tell what you think of the story.

Fiswoode Tarleton wrote "Meddlesome," a tale you will find in the volume *Bloody Ground* (Dial Press). What has the fight therein detailed to do with education in general and particular?

Should you enjoy "The Fighting Heart" more if it were expanded to 3,000 or 4,000 words? Why?

After you have read all the stories in this volume, write a paper telling which one you like best and giving your reasons why you prefer it to the others.

PUBLISHERS' ADDRESSES

A list of publishers most often mentioned in the bibliographies found in this book. The abbreviated form at the left is usually employed. The addresses given are all in New York City, but a number of the publishers have establishments elsewhere:

Appleton	D. Appleton-Century Co., 35 West 32d Street.
Boni and Liveright	Now Horace Liveright, 61 West 48th Street. (*See also* A. and C. Boni, 66 Fifth Avenue.)
Brentano	Brentano's, 1 West 47th Street.
Century Co.	*See* Appleton.
Dial	Dial Press, Inc., 152 West 13th Street.
Dodd, Mead	Dodd, Mead and Co., 449 Fourth Avenue.
Doubleday, Doran	Doubleday, Doran and Co., 244 Madison Avenue. (Or, Garden City, New York.) Formerly Doubleday, Page and Co., and George H. Doran. Books published by George H. Doran before 1927 are followed by his name.
Dutton	E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 300 Fourth Avenue.
Harper	Harper and Brothers, 49 East 33d Street.
Holt	Henry Holt and Co., 1 Park Avenue.
Houghton Mifflin	Houghton Mifflin Co., 386 Fourth Avenue.
Knopf	Alfred Knopf, 730 Fifth Avenue.
McBride	Robert M. McBride and Co., 7 West 16th Street.

Macmillan	The Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Avenue.
Oxford University Press	Oxford University Press, 114 Fifth Avenue.
Payson and Clarke	Payson and Clarke, 6 East 53d Street. (Now Brewer and Warren.)
Putnam	G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2 West 45th Street.
Scribner	Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Avenue.